

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

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LATEST—FROM THE SPHINX.

Across the desert's sandy sea
Though sorely battered brows I rear,
Still with my stony eyes I see,
Still with my stony ears I hear.

Thousands of years this resting place
Betwixt the Pyramids I hold,
And still their daily shadow trace,
Broadening o'er me, blue and cold.

And many wonders have I known,
And many a race and rule of men,
Since first upon the desert's zone
I fixed my calm, unwinking ken.

'Neath these same orbs that still revolve
Above my granite brows sedate,
I forged the riddles, which to solve
Was fame, wherein to fail was fate.

But darker riddle never yet
I framed for ŒDIPUS the wise,
Than those that to the world I set,
Touching these things before my eyes.

What of this piercing of the sands?
What of this union of the seas?
This grasp of unfamiliar hands,
This blending of strange litanies?

Aves and Allah-hu's that flow
From ulemas and monsignore —
These *feridjees* and *robes-fourreau*,
These eunuchs and ambassadors —

This *pot-pourri* of East and West,
Pillau and *potage à la bisque*; —
Circassian belles whom WORTH has drest,
And Parisiennes à *l'odalisque*!

Riddles that need no Sphinx to put,
But more than ŒDIPUS to read —
What good or ill from LESSERS' cut
Eastward and Westward shall proceed?

Whose loss or profit? War or peace?
Sores healed, or old wounds oped anew?
Upon the loosing of the seas,
Strife's bitter waters let loose too?

The Eastern question raised, at last?
The Eastern question laid for aye?
Russian ambition fettered fast?
Or feathered but for freer play?

The shattering of the Sultan's throne?
Or the Khedivè's rise, to fall?
England and France, like hawks let flown?
Or *Aigle* on perch and Bull in stall?

Answer in vain the Sphinx invites;
A darkling veil the future hides;
We know what seas the work unites,
Who knows what sovereigns it divides?

Punch.

OURS.

It chanced on a beautiful summer night
When the moon was young, when the stars were
bright,
And the blossoms slept in the tender light,
And dreamed of the zephyr's sighs,
That a wondrous spell in our home was
wrought —
Of hopes and fears and bewildering thought
By a fairy flower that an angel brought
From the gardens of Paradise.

The south wind fluttered its perfumed wings,
And essayed the song that the bulbuls sings;
And the firefly sparkled in mystic rings,
Like lamps at a fairy ball;
The young leaves, whispering sweet and low,
In a tongue that only Dryads know,
Made love to the waves that danced below
To the chant of the waterfall.

The cloud-ships lay in the far-off West,
With their masts and spars and sails at rest,
Or floated along in an idle quest
Of some bright Elysian Isle;
And fairy gondolas here and there,
Moved down the streams of the upper air,
And moored their prows to the shadow stair
Of some Gothic palace-pile.

So the hours of that summer night were told,
The starlight faded from river and wold,
And morning, in garments of purple and gold,
Awakened the sleeping earth;
But the cherub form, with its face so fair,
Crowned with a glory of golden hair —
Like the morning sunshine gleaming there —
Still nestled beside our hearth.

POETRY BY PILGARLIC.

ON THE NINTH OF NOVEMBER.

HA! That peal, thought I awaking,
Of some day auspicious tells,
Thus mine early slumber breaking,
Blessing on ye, merry bells.

Let me see. Yes, I remember
Why that sound mine ear assails;
This the Ninth is of November,
Birthday of the PRINCE OF WALES.

Every day, boys, whilst we mellow
As do medlars — grievous bore!
Is the birthday of some fellow
Who has lived, and lives no more.

Ring the birthday peal, however,
For all born with Fortune's boon,
Means to live without endeavour,
In the mouth a silver spoon.

Ring it too, but ring it other,
On their birthday whose life's line
Has, from birth, been care and bother;
Ring it backwards upon mine.

Punch.

From The Edinburgh Review.
TRAVELS IN THE CAUCASUS.*

WE had occasion, in a recent Number, to advert to the character and proceedings of the Alpine Club; and to show that it was not (as is too often imagined) a mere association of foolhardy young men for the empty gratification of climbing heights supposed to be inaccessible; but that its members had really done much good work in the Alps, and contributed materially to our knowledge of the most important range of European mountains. But it had for some time been evident that they would not stop there. The spirit of enterprise thus aroused was beginning to extend itself into other fields; as the peaks and lofty passes of Switzerland and the Tyrol came to be familiar to the enterprising mountaineers, there were naturally found some who wandered into more remote and less frequented regions in quest of the excitement of novelty: and the later numbers of the "Alpine Journal" are diversified with accounts of excursions in the Sierra Nevada, Norway, Iceland, and even the Tibetan Himalayas.

But there still remained one great mountain range, which had been unaccountably neglected, though apparently calculated to afford a peculiarly favourable field for Alpine enterprise. By a singular accident, the Caucasus, though by far the earliest known of all really elevated mountain chains, and familiar, in name at least, to the Greeks in the days of Æschylus and Herodotus — when they had never even heard of the Alps and Pyrenees — had of late years attracted very little attention. Yet it was situated within comparatively easy reach; its loftiest summits were known to surpass the highest peaks of the Alps, while they were believed to be yet untrodden by human foot. It was known also, that since the close of the Crimean War, the Russian Government had permanently established its authority over the mountain tribes with whom it had so long been in a state of chronic warfare; and it might, therefore, be fairly presumed that an attempt to penetrate into the recesses

of these wild mountains would have none but physical obstacles to encounter.

But there was another reason that seemed to make it especially incumbent on the members of the Alpine Club to undertake the exploration of the Caucasus. As early as May 1865, Mr. George (at that time Editor of the "Alpine Journal") drew their attention to the circumstance that the Russian Government had officially adopted the view already taken by many geographers, and fixed on the line of the Caucasus as the boundary between Europe and Asia. The consequence was, that the highest summits of the chain came to be included in Europe, and Mont Blanc could no longer claim its proud preeminence as the monarch of European mountains. Such an announcement was eminently calculated to call forth the energies of the Alpine Club, and stimulate some of its members to atone for their past neglect, and take the lead in the investigation of this new and interesting region.

In January 1868, the author of the volume before us, Mr. Freshfield, in company with Mr. Tucker — both of them names well known for daring and successful expeditions among the High Alps — left England for Egypt and the Holy Land, with the view of proceeding to the Caucasus as soon as the season should be sufficiently advanced. They were afterwards joined at Tiflis by Mr. A. W. Moore, another well-known mountaineer, and they took with them an experienced Chamouni guide, François Devouassoud, who proved a useful travelling servant, as well as a most valuable auxiliary in their mountain expeditions.

Of their preliminary tour, one portion alone possesses sufficient novelty and interest to deserve notice. Circumstances having given them a peculiarly favourable opportunity of visiting the little-known regions east of the Jordan, and the remarkable ruins of the Hauran and the Lejah, which have of late years attracted so much attention, Mr. Freshfield has given an interesting description of this part of Syria, and has "felt himself bound" to record his opinion of the true character and probable age of the ruins in question. Painful as it might be to dispel the illusions raised by his more imaginative predeces-

* *Travels in the Central Caucasus and Bashan, including Visits to Ararat and Tabreez, and Ascents of Kazbek and Elbruz.* By DOUGLAS W. FRESHFIELD. London: 1869.

sors, the conclusion forced upon him and his companions was that the so-called "Giant Cities" of Bashan, which had excited so much wonder in the minds of Mr. Porter and Mr. Cyril Graham, were in fact no giant cities at all, but mere provincial towns, of the time of the Roman Empire, when the districts of Auranitis and Trachonitis were still flourishing and populous provinces, enjoying a prosperity to which they have been strangers ever since the Mahometan conquest. The question is one into which our space will not allow us to enter, and we must content ourselves with referring our readers to Mr. Freshfield's pages for the details, while we express our entire concurrence in his conclusion that "it is not of Og, but of the Antonines, not of the Israelitish, but of the Saracenic conquest, that most modern travellers in the Hauran will be reminded" (p. 59).

Before they proceeded to attack the Caucasus itself, Mr. Freshfield and Mr. Tucker had designed to ascend the still more famous peak of Ararat, a mountain that has already been more than once ascended, and on which they therefore anticipated little difficulty. Yet their attempt proved a failure, and they were obliged to succumb to sheer fatigue, arising apparently from the great length of the ascent, and the immense quantity of snow with which the mountain is covered at so early a period as the month of June, combined with the total want of training by previous excursions. Whatever the cause, this failure on the part of two such distinguished Alpine climbers to attain the summit will undoubtedly tend strongly to confirm the superstition prevalent among the natives at the foot of the mountain, that its top never has been, and never can be, trodden by mortal foot—a belief which they still maintain, notwithstanding the two recorded and undoubted ascents of Dr. Parrot in 1829, and of General Chodzko in 1850; "neither of which (as Mr. Freshfield justly adds) is open to the slightest doubt."

But we hasten to introduce our readers to the Caucasus itself—a region of which they probably know as little as Mr. Freshfield and his companions before they set out on their adventurous journey. So vague and uncertain was the information they were

able to collect concerning the scene of their proposed explorations—the glaciers and highest portions of the range—that they must have enjoyed in a great degree the interest, and may fairly claim, in some measure, the credit, of original discoverers. They are certainly the first who have opened to the British public a mine of beauty and interest that will not soon be exhausted; and have led a way that cannot fail to be followed by many succeeding travellers into regions of surpassing loveliness, and some of the grandest mountain scenery in the world. It may well excite surprise, when we learn the character of the country thus explored for the first time by these pioneers, that it should have so long remained unknown. But we must remember that it is only of late years that the complete subjugation of the mountain-tribes by Russia has rendered their fastnesses accessible to peaceable travellers. Before that they were visited almost exclusively by Russian officers, and the love of mountain scenery—of comparatively recent growth even among Englishmen—has not yet found its way into the Russian breast. Of the travellers from whom knowledge of the Caucasus was previously derived—Klaproth, Dubois de Montpéreux, Haxthausen, and others—hardly any had penetrated into the inner recesses of the mountains, and their attention had been principally devoted to ethnographical inquiries into the relations of the various tribes that inhabit them, or to scientific observations on the productions of the lower and more accessible regions. Hence it may fairly be said that while we knew a good deal of the country about the Caucasus, we had very little knowledge of the mountains themselves. The completion by the Russian Government of a trigonometric survey of the whole chain must have led to a far more complete knowledge of its highest ranges than was previously possessed; but the results of these recent explorations were wholly unknown in England when Mr. Freshfield set out on his journey; it was not till his arrival at Tiflis that he was able to procure a copy of the Government map: and valuable as its assistance undoubtedly proved, the errors with which it was found to abound sufficiently showed how little the Russian engineers

had troubled themselves with the peaks and glaciers of the central range. It was this portion of the chain, on the contrary, that formed the main centre of attraction to the English travellers; and richly were their exertions rewarded by the glorious scenery which it was found to present.

The scientific results of their explorations have been already given to the public, in a paper read before the Geographical Society by Mr. Freshfield, in January last, and honoured with the warm commendations of Sir Roderick Murchison, who justly remarked that such a journey could never have been accomplished by any but trained Alpine travellers. A graphic sketch of its principal features has also appeared in the "Alpine Journal," from the pen of Mr. Tucker, who possesses, in common with his fellow-traveller, the advantage of being as well able to describe as to observe the novel and interesting scenes through which their adventurous spirit led them. The fuller narrative presented to the public in Mr. Freshfield's volume contains an account of their adventures and experiences at once animated and unpretending. It is altogether free from that affectation which disfigures so many modern books of travels; the style is throughout marked by simplicity and good taste; and the author tells us plainly and well what he and his comrades did and saw, instead of stuffing out his book with second-hand information and quotations from former travellers. If the Caucasus acquires as we believe it must do before long—a wide-spread and increasing popularity as a resort for enterprising tourists, it will owe not a little to the agreeable manner in which it has been for the first time introduced to the British public.

In its general character and conformation the range of the Caucasus may be considered as presenting more analogy with the Pyrenees than with the Alps. Like the former chain, it preserves the same general direction unchanged, extending across from the Black Sea to the Caspian in one unbroken line, nearly 700 miles in length. It is only in its central portion that it attains to the great elevation which has given it so much celebrity; but throughout its whole extent it forms a continuous mountain barrier, separating the vast steppes of Southern

Russia from the hilly and broken regions of Georgia and the adjoining provinces, and constituting the natural limit between Europe and Asia. It is indeed a singularly well-defined chain, descending at each extremity to the sea, and united on the south with the mountains of Armenia only by a low range of hills, which form the watershed between the streams flowing into the Black Sea and those that descend eastwards towards the Caspian. It is thus, in fact, wholly unconnected with any of the other great mountain systems, either of Europe or Asia.

Another point may be mentioned in which also the Caucasus resembles the Pyrenees rather than the Alps. In both cases the highest, or at least the most important, summits are in some measure detached from the main range; and, just as the Mont Perdu and the Maladetta both lie south of the central ridge of the Pyrenees, and are, consequently, included in Spain, so Mount Elbruz and Kazbek—the two best known summits of the Caucasus—are situated decidedly on the north side of that chain, and must therefore, be geographically assigned to Europe, if the line of demarcation be drawn along the watershed of the range. Both these mountains are, in fact, of volcanic origin, and geologically speaking, unconnected with the granitic masses which constitute the central axis of the chain.

Throughout its whole extent the chain of the Caucasus is traversed only by one natural pass, which has, consequently, formed in all ages the line of communication between the countries to the north and those to the south of it. This passage, commonly known as the Pass of Dariel, from the remarkable defile of that name, cuts across the main chain nearly in the middle, and in the immediate vicinity of some of its highest peaks. It is now traversed by a regular high road, recently constructed by the Russians, and engineered in the same style as the modern highways across the Alps. The task was not an easy one, as the summit level attains the height of very nearly 8,000 feet, thus exceeding all the carriage roads across the Alps, with the single exception of the Stelvio; and the defiles to be traversed were of the most formidable description. But, notwithstanding its nat-

ural difficulties, the Pass of Dariel has, undoubtedly, been frequented in all ages, and was already well known to the Romans under the name of *Pylæ Caucasie*.

The only other line of communication — it can hardly be called a pass — is that along the shores of the Caspian, between the last offshoots of the mountain range and the sea. But here also the mountains descend in one place so close to the water's edge — in the neighbourhood of the town of Derbend — that the passage has been closed with a wall, while the numerous rivers to be crossed present so many difficulties, that this line of route has been much less frequented than the more central Pass of Dariel. It was, moreover, known to the ancients as the *Pylæ Albanie* — from the adjoining tribe of the Albanians — and was, according to Herodotus, the route followed by the Scythians who pursued the Cimmerians into Western Asia — the earliest inroad of the northern nations of which we have any historical account.*

The highest portion of this great range is that extending from Mount Elbruz on the west to Mount Kazbek on the east; and it is to the exploration of this part of the chain that our Alpine travellers exclusively devoted their attention. But when we consider that the portion thus selected extends more than 120 miles as the crow flies — considerably more than the distance from Mont Blanc to the St. Gothard — it is evident that there was work enough to occupy the most energetic mountaineers. Throughout this distance the main chain rises almost continuously above the limits of perpetual snow, and is clothed with vast masses and fields of snow, sending down on both sides glaciers equal in extent, and even superior in beauty, to the finest of those in the Alps. Mount Elbruz itself, the giant of the whole range, rises far above his companions, attaining the height of 18,526 feet — more than 2,700 feet higher than Mont Blanc. But, among the snow-clad summits to the eastward, three, at least, including Mount Kazbek, surpass the monarch of European mountains; while several others rise above 15,000 feet, a height attained by Mont Blanc and Monte Rosa alone among Alpine peaks. Towards the west, on the contrary, the chain sinks rapidly. None of the mountains west of Mount Elbruz attain to the level of perpetual snow; and this part of the range consequently presents comparatively little attraction to Alpine travellers. But the case is otherwise as we proceed farther towards the east, where the

chain, though cut by the deep depression of the Pass of Dariel, soon rises again to nearly the same elevation as before, and presents (as viewed by our travellers from the summit of Kazbek) "group beyond group of snowy peaks, stretching away to the far off Bazardjusi, the monarch of the Eastern Caucasus." All these peaks, some of them exceeding the Matterhorn in height, "are still virgin ground for future explorers."

The ascent of Mount Kazbek was "the first piece in the programme" of our adventurous travellers. This mountain has always occupied a prominent position amongst Caucasian summits, and, as Mr. Freshfield remarks, "has somewhat unfairly robbed its true sovereign, Elbruz, of public attention." The explanation is obvious. Kazbek stands close to the Pass of Dariel, and rears its giant form in full view of the traveller along the high road from Europe into Asia, while he sees Elbruz only from a distance "as a huge white cloud on the southern horizon," as he jolts wearily along across the endless steppes to the northward. The two other summits, which, in reality, exceed Kazbek in height, the Koschtantau and Dychtau, though visible also from the plain to the north, are eclipsed by the more imposing mass of Elbruz, and appear never to have attracted the attention of anyone, except the Russian engineers engaged on the trigonometrical survey. It is doubtless owing to this favourable position that repeated attempts had already been made to ascend Kazbek before the visit of the Alpine travellers. None of these, however, had proved successful; and hence they found, not unnaturally, on their arrival in the Caucasian provinces, a wide-spread belief in the inaccessibility of the peak, and were regarded with a mixture of amusement and pity as "the Englishmen who were trying to get up Kazbek, and had the audacity to expect to succeed, where captains, colonels, and even generals, of the Imperial Russian Service had failed." (P. 191.) In justice to these unsuccessful aspirants, it must be remembered, that not only were they accompanied only by timid and inexperienced native guides, but they were unprovided with that "mountaineering gear" — especially ropes and ice-axes — without which no member of the Alpine Club would attempt the ascent of any formidable peak. Even with all these means and appliances, and the invaluable aid of their experienced Chamouni guide, Mr. Freshfield and his companions found the task by no means an easy one. After passing the night in a fa-

* Herod. i. 104; iv. 12.

avourable situation at a height of 11,000 feet, on the southern slope of the mountain, they left their Caucasian porters behind them, and the three travellers, with their own guide, started alone, upon the real ascent. After encountering various difficulties, and having one very narrow escape from an accident that might have been fatal to the whole party — and undoubtedly would have proved so had their rope failed them at the critical moment — they found the most fatiguing and difficult part of their work still before them, in the ascent of a long and exceedingly steep ice-slope, which led to the saddle between the two summits of the mountain.

"For the next four hours there was scarcely one easy step. The ice, when not bare, was thinly coated with snow. A long steep ice-slope is bad enough in the first state, as mountain-climbers know, but it is infinitely worse in the second. In bare ice a secure step may be cut; through loose incoherent snow it cannot. François went through the form of cutting, but it was of little use to the two front men, and none at all to those in the rear. In many places we found the safest plan was to crawl up on our hands and knees, clinging with feet and ice-axes to the slippery staircase. It has always remained a mystery to us how we got from step to step without a slip. The difficulties of the feat were increased by a bitter wind, which swept across the slope in fitful blasts of intense fury, driving the snow in blinding showers into our faces as we crouched down for shelter, and numbing our hands to such a degree that we could scarcely retain hold of our axes." (Pp. 199, 200.)

It is clear that the ascent of Kazbek is not one to be hastily tried by any but experienced mountaineers. But difficult as was the climb up the ice-slope in question, its descent was judged to be a sheer impossibility, and hence the travellers were compelled to abandon the idea of returning by the same route as they had ascended, and had to find their way down the northern face of the mountain through a wholly unknown tract of rocks, snow-fields, and glaciers. Such a task is calculated to try the highest powers of the true Alpine explorer; but they judged, and as it proved correctly, that the glaciers they were following must ultimately discharge their waters into the deep glen of the Devdorak torrent, and by this means they succeeded, after a long circuit, in reaching the high road below the village of Kazbek. It may be well to add that the route thus accidentally discovered proved to be far easier than that on the south side, and will doubtless be the course

generally adopted in future ascents of the mountain.

The success of this achievement was at first hailed with enthusiasm, and created intense excitement among the villagers; and the travellers "found themselves installed as heroes" in the public opinion of those who had shortly before treated them as mere humbugs. But when the news was duly transmitted by themselves to the Russian officials in Georgia and appeared in the "Tiflis Gazette," it was received with general incredulity. A person high in authority remarked — "that it was strange that a mountain which had been declared for sixty years inaccessible by Russian officers, should be ascended by Englishmen in a few days. The answer of the insulted officers was prompt and ingenious: 'We could have said we had been to the top as easily as the Englishmen.'" (P. 445.)

It appears from an anecdote reported by Mr. Freshfield, on the authority of M. Khatissian, an Armenian gentleman, who had spent many months in examining the neighborhood of the mountain, and making scientific observations on its glaciers, that such a mode of gaining credit is in fact by no means unknown to Russian officials. The attention of the authorities has been repeatedly called to sudden and violent inundations that have taken place in the valley of the Terek, erroneously attributed to "avalanches" from Kazbek, but in reality caused by the occasional advance of the glaciers at their lower extremity, creating a barrier of ice across the torrent issuing from the great glacier of Devdorak, the waters of which are thus dammed up until they suddenly break through the barrier and sweep everything before them.* Such catastrophes have repeatedly occurred since the Russian occupation of these provinces. But in some instances it seems that they are apocryphal: —

"The record of one (in 1842) is preserved in the official archives at Tiflis, where the reports of the officers stationed at the Dariel fortress, and commissioned by the then Viceroy to ascertain the imminence of the impending danger, still exist. Mons. Khatissian, with some trouble discovered the officer whose reports were fullest and most intelligible. He asked for further details as to the nature of the catastrophe. The

* The geological reader will remember the celebrated inundation in the Val de Bagnes, which arose from a somewhat similar cause. But a more precise parallel is that of the Vernagt glacier, in the valley of Isen in the Tyrol, the oscillations of which, as it alternately advances and recedes, have caused repeated and disastrous inundations in the valley below.

Colonel was at first confused and ambiguous, but soon, with an air of frankness, exclaimed, 'I will tell you the real state of the case—I was never near the mountain at all.' 'But here I have an elaborate description of the state of the glaciers, with your signature?' 'That is very possible. You see, I received orders from Tiflis to go and report on the state of the mountain. Why should I peril my life to no purpose? I could not avert the danger, so I wrote, and said the mountain was much as usual. Then I got second instructions; I was to go in person and send a full detailed report of the exact nature of the danger to be apprehended. I started; I climbed into that horrible glen; I saw precipices overhanging my head—torrents roaring at my feet. Suddenly I came in view of a whole mountain of ice, already torn into fragments by the steepness of the slope to which it clung. To advance was certain death. I reflected on my wife and children, fled back to the road as quickly as possible, and reported that the expected avalanche had fallen, and that, happily, no one was the worse for it.' 'Then,' asked Mons. K., 'the celebrated avalanche of 1842 never existed but on paper—in fact, is your creation?' 'Exactly, Monsieur,' was the reply." (Pp. 191, 192.)

The journey from Kazbek to Pari along the southern side of the great mountain chain, by what is termed in Alpine travellers' phrase "a high-level route," was in many respects the most interesting part of our travellers' explorations, and while it lay through a country almost unvisited by any human traveller,* led them through a succession of scenery of the most beautiful description. The first valleys traversed, those from which flow the upper waters of the Terek and the Ardon, were indeed arid and uninteresting, partaking of the same barren character with the upper valleys on the northern side of the chain. But after crossing the pass of Mamisson and descending into the basin of the Rion, the waters of which flow towards the Black Sea, all this was changed, and the mountain slopes were found to be clothed with the richest forests, with a dense undergrowth of flowering rhododendrons and azaleas, while above them rose magnificent snow-clad peaks, not less than 15,000 or 16,000 feet in height, with glaciers and ice-falls equal to, and even surpassing, the finest of those in the Alps. The transition was remarkably abrupt. "Few people (observes Mr. Freshfield) who have not seen an abso-

lute treeless district can appreciate the magical effect of coming out of one, suddenly, upon a densely forested region." The Mamisson Pass, which separates the two regions, is about 9,500 feet in height, but offers few natural difficulties; it is already traversed by a broad horse-path, and will probably before long be crossed by a carriage-road, already projected by the Russian authorities, and which, according to Mr. Freshfield, "has some chance of completion," owing to its obvious importance as the shortest line from Vladikafkaz to Kutais and the coast of the Black Sea. Whenever this line is opened it will greatly facilitate the access of travellers into the heart of the Caucasus and the glorious mountain scenery which it presents.

The same luxuriant vegetation continued to be the characteristic of the valleys which were now traversed in succession, from the head waters of the Rion to those of the Ingur; and the beauty of the scenery served to compensate for the roughness of the travelling and the difficulties encountered in forcing their way along pathless slopes, or through the dense thickets and matted masses of the primæval forests. But lonely as were these valleys, our travellers were too genuine mountaineers not to look with a longing eye on the huge peaks and vast ice-fields that overhung them, and they accordingly made an excursion to the north side of the chain, crossing the mountain range by a glacier pass (11,250 feet high), which in Mr. Tucker's expressive phrase, "was not wholly easy," while that by which they returned (12,250 feet) "was wholly difficult," involving the ascent of a "glorious ice-fall," some 4,000 feet in height, which cost them six hours of arduous and unremitting labour. Of this part of their journey Mr. Freshfield remarks that, "the famous *séracs* of the Col du Géant are child's play when put in comparison with these Caucasian rivals." On the whole they considered these two passes as "worthy in every respect to be matched with the finest in the Alps."

But the mighty summits that rose above these fields of ice, especially the highest and most striking of all, the Adai Khokh, presented so formidable a character that even our adventurous tourists recoiled from the attempt to scale them, and they were pronounced, if not absolutely inaccessible—a word which, as Mr. Freshfield suggests, may now perhaps be banished from a mountaineer's dictionary—at least practically so for so small a party. Still more imposing is the stupendous peak of Uschba (sixty miles farther west) which is described by

* Mr. George, writing in 1865, remarks that of the country to the south of the central chain he can find no description; and, although it must have been in some degree explored by the officers engaged on the Russian Trigonometrical Survey, no account of their labours has appeared, or at least has found its way out of Russia.

Mr. Freshfield as "beyond all comparison the most wonderful mountain mass" he had ever beheld:—

"Tier above tier of precipices rose straight up from the valley, culminating in two tremendous towers, separated by a deep depression. The twin summits resembled one another in form, and appeared to be long roof-like ridges, falling away in slopes of mingled rock and ice of terrific steepness. The idea of climbing either of them seemed too insane to be so much as suggested, and even the lower spurs of the mountain above the meadows of Betscho are so tremendous that it looked as if a stone dropped from the top of either of the peaks would scarcely stop rolling before it reached the valley. There was no mistake about it, the Caucasian Matterhorn was found at last, only here we had one Matterhorn piled on another, and then multiplied by two." (P. 330.)

It is evident that there is still abundant work for the Alpine Club to be found in the Caucasus for some time to come. Yet this noble peak, which was estimated at not less than 16,000 feet in height, is neither marked nor named upon the Russian Government map; so that Mr. Freshfield and his companions may justly claim the credit of being its discoverers. Equally unnoticed is another mountain to the west of Uscba, known by the name of Tungzurun, which was judged by our travellers to be probably the highest summit in this part of the chain. On the other hand, the map perversely marks a regular pass "straight up the centre of an ice-fall which for height, breadth, and purity exceeds anything of the kind in the Alps," forming "a frozen cascade" of about 4,000 feet in height, and of a dazzling whiteness, similar to that of the well-known glacier of Rosenlauri. The Russian engineers appear, indeed, to have "given up this part of the chain as a bad job," and contented themselves with a very superficial and distant survey of the peaks that were visible from the northern plains. Doubtless they did not reckon on adventurous English travellers penetrating into these wild regions, so as to expose their shortcomings.

The valley of the Ingur, with its numerous and important tributaries, while it affords the nearest glimpses of these mountain marvels, is not less remarkable for the extreme beauty of the lower scenery. Mr. Freshfield and Mr. Tucker vie with one another in their ecstasies over the transcendent loveliness of the scenes through which they passed. "It is quite impossible (says the former in one place) to convey in words any idea of the beauty of the landscape, or the grandeur of the scale, which placed the

scenery beyond comparison with any of the show-sights of Switzerland." The enjoyment of these beauties was moreover enhanced by the facility with which they were beheld, presenting so strong a contrast with the difficulties they had recently encountered. "The excellently-made paths down the valley ordinarily run along the crests of the spurs, and their beauty is almost indescribable. The path wanders at will, now on this side of the ridge, now on that, as if itself doubtful whether the more enchanting spectacle be afforded by the broad vale of the Mushal Aliz, dotted with towered villages, and backed by the long and finely curving glaciers of the main chain, or by the deep pine-clad gorge on the southern side, across which the Leila mountains raise their snowy crests."*

Unfortunately there is another side to this enchanting picture. The valley of the Ingur is emphatically one of those regions "where every prospect pleases, and only man is vile." The Suanetians, as the inhabitants of this secluded district are termed, are beyond comparison the worst people in the Caucasus. Herr Radde, a German savant resident at Tiflis, who appears to be the only traveller that had previously visited these valleys, had given a most unfavourable description of the inhabitants, in whom the savage stupidity of their looks, and the insolence and rudeness of their manners, served as a just indication of the ferocity of their character. The inhabitants of one village are constantly engaged in hostilities with those of the next; robbery and murder were so frequent as scarcely to be accounted crimes, and individuals are frequently to be met with who have committed ten or more murders. At Jibiani, the highest village in the valley of the Ingur, where Mr. Freshfield and his companions—ignorant at the time of the character of the population—had hoped to find "a kind of 'Pontresina'" from whence to explore the neighbouring mountains, the villagers proved so insolent and aggressive, that they were obliged to hasten their departure, which in the end they were not able to effect without coming almost to an open conflict. Nothing saved them from robbery and violence but the fact that all three travellers were armed with revolvers, weapons whose unknown powers are regarded by the barbarians of the Caucasus with a kind of mysterious awe. "The difficulty (as Mr. Freshfield observes) lies in enforcing this impression while keeping clear of actual

* Alpine Journal, vol. iv. p. 249.

fighting." The travellers appear to have displayed, on this as on other occasions, a degree of coolness combined with resolution highly creditable to the character of the Alpine Club.

"The nature of the country (remarks Mr. Freshfield) has, no doubt, had a great share in forming the savage and wild character of its inhabitants. A large basin, forty miles long by fifteen broad, is shut in on all sides by glacier-crowned ridges, and the only access to it from the outer world, is by means of a narrow, and at times impassable, ravine, or over lofty mountain passes." (P. 296.) The Russian Government, after carrying their arms into the valley, endeavoured for a time to enforce the submission and tranquillity of the people, by maintaining military posts within their territory, but these have been gradually withdrawn, and the Suanetians have been left to the enjoyment of virtual independence, "and at full liberty to follow their own wicked ways of theft and murder to their hearts' content." A post of *ten* Cossacks, still stationed at Pari, one of the most westerly villages in the valley, is the entire military force maintained by the Russians in the district, and was, indeed, the only sign of Russian authority which the travellers had met with after leaving Kazbek.

From Pari they directed their course once more across the central chain; but this time by a known pass, occasionally frequented by the peasantry of the adjoining valleys, and over which it was possible to drive cattle, as the travellers learned by meeting a party of Suanetian peasants, who had been on a "cattle-lifting expedition across the pass, and were returning with eleven cows which they had stolen from the Tartars of the Upper Baksan. These Tartars, who are Mohammedans, and a branch of the Circassian stock, proved to be in all respects a very superior race to those on the southern side of the range; and at Uruspieh, the place where our travellers fixed their head-quarters for the ascent of Elbruz, they found a hospitable reception, comfortable quarters, and a faint tinge of European civilization. "Only two days' journey from the Russian watering-places of Pätigorsk and Kislovodsk, Uruspieh is frequently visited by Russian travellers or officials, and even the rambling photographer has carried his camera thus far." The native "princes," as the chief men of the village were styled, were far better-informed men than any that had been previously met with; they were familiar with the events of the Crimean

War, and were evidently disposed to look with favour upon Englishmen. One of them had been in the Russian service, spoke Russian fluently, and had sufficient knowledge of the other countries of the west to be aware that Englishmen lived exclusively on beefsteaks and porter, and apologized for not being able to supply them with their national food!

What was more to the purpose, they entered warmly into the pursuits of the travellers, and furnished them with every assistance for the ascent of Mount Elbruz, an enterprise that appears to have really presented little difficulty to such practised mountaineers as Mr. Freshfield and his companions, although they suffered severely from the intense cold, aggravated as it was by a violent wind. The prospect from the summit is pronounced to be decidedly superior to that from Mont Blanc, "the Pennine Alps looking puny in comparison with Koschtantau and his neighbours from Elbruz." But although the mountain is in fact, like its rival in the Alps, far easier to ascend than many of the inferior peaks of the chain, there is really no room to wonder that none of the previous attempts had been successful, a point which we concur with Mr. Freshfield in regarding as completely established.* It must be always borne in mind that not only were the former explorers untrained to Alpine work, and unaccustomed to glaciers, but they were unprovided with ice-axes and ropes, those invaluable safeguards to the mountaineer, the importance of which was sufficiently shown on the present occasion, Mr. Freshfield himself having slipped into a concealed crevasse, which, had he not been securely attached to the rope, would have put an abrupt termination to his wanderings in the Caucasus.

As Uruspieh will probably one of these days become a kind of Caucasian Chamouni, it is satisfactory to learn that the Tartar porters who accompanied the travellers on this occasion—two of them reaching the actual summit—showed themselves

* The only expedition that can really put forward any pretension to have anticipated the English travellers is that conducted by General Emmanuel in 1829, an account of which was published by one of the German savants (M. Kupffer) who accompanied it. But even according to their own account it is clear that the travellers halted at a height of 15,000 feet, and it was only a solitary Circassian guide, who was *alleged* to have reached the top, and who claimed in consequence the promised reward. The utterly unsatisfactory character of this evidence was clearly pointed out by Mr. George in the "Alpine Journal," and is again discussed by Mr. Freshfield in an appendix to his present work. None of his readers, we believe, whether members of the Alpine Club or not, will have any doubt upon the subject.

good mountaineers and capital walkers, and are pronounced by Mr. Freshfield to contain "the raw material" of first-rate guides. Their share in the glory of the success naturally added to the excitement it created among the villagers; no doubt could, in this instance, be raised as to the object having really been attained; and the first ascent of "Minghi Tau"—as the mountain is called on the Circassian side—will, doubtless, long be remembered by the Tartars of Uruspieh.

The travellers had now fully accomplished the three great objects of their journey—the ascent of Kazbek and Elbruz, and the establishment of a high-level route between them; and the remainder of their wanderings presents comparatively little interest. From Uruspieh they descended to Pätigorsk, where the existence of mineral springs has given rise to a Russian watering-place, that presents a singular oasis of civilization in the midst between the dreary steppes of Southern Russia and the mountain wilds of the Caucasus. The contrast, "characteristic of Russia, between an excess of luxury and a lack of the commonest articles of civilization," is seen in its most exaggerated form in the Caucasian provinces, and was the more striking to travellers coming fresh from the mountains to a place possessing all the external characters of an European watering-place. At Pätigorsk they found a hotel of palatial character, Russian officers in full uniform, ladies dressed in the latest French fashions, loungers in patent leather boots strolling about the gardens and listening to the strains of a military band in the intervals of drinking the waters. But these attractions could not detain them long, and they soon started for a fresh expedition into the mountains, ascending the valley of the Tcherek to the basin of Balkar, at the very foot of the glaciers, and thence, crossing the Stulevesk Pass (about 10,000 feet in height), into the valley of the Uruch. From this pass they had a splendid view of the great gigantic group of the Central Caucasus, with its two towering summits of Koschtantau and Dychttau;* but, tempting as these must have looked to such adventurous climbers as the party in question, the difficulties they presented from that side were pronounced insuperable, and Mr. Freshfield and his companions were compelled to leave "the second and third sum-

mits in the Caucasus and in Europe," not only unscaled, but unattempted.

In general, the scenery of the northern slopes of the Caucasus is decidedly inferior in beauty to that on the south, and wants especially the richness and variety of vegetation which distinguishes the Trans-Caucasian valleys; but the view of the great glacier range from a point above the valley of Balkar appeared worthy to be compared with those from the Gornergrat and the Äggischhorn, while the defiles through which the streams of the Tcherek and the Uruch force their way, are said to have a character of savage grandeur surpassing those of Pfeffers or the Via Mala. The gorge of Dariel, which the travellers traversed on their return journey to Tiflis, appeared to them unfit to rank beside the other two, though "it had nothing to fear from a comparison with the finest defiles in the Alps." But here, as is too often the case in the Alps, the mere existence of a carriage-road is felt as in some degree detracting from the impressiveness of the mountain gorge.

In summing up the comparative merits of Caucasian and Alpine scenery, Mr. Freshfield does not hesitate to give a decided preference to the former. "There is nothing," he says, "in Switzerland or the Tyrol that can compare with the magnificent grouping of the Suanetian ranges, or with the gorges cut by the northern rivers through the limestone ridge which bars their way down to the steppe. In the Caucasus the slopes are steeper, and the usual character of the peaks is, that they shoot up from the valleys at their base in unbroken walls of rock and ice, to which the cliffs of the Wetterhorn afford the nearest parallel." (P. 449.)

But if the peaks and glaciers of the Alps, which we are accustomed to regard as their especial pride, are thus inferior to those of its rival, still more decidedly is this the case with the forests that clothe their sides. Of the richness and variety of the magnificent forests of Mingrelia all travellers speak in terms of perfect rapture. Many of them are still untouched by the axe of the woodman, and they have the peculiar advantage that deciduous trees here attain to a much greater elevation than in the Alps, in some instances rising almost up to the snow-line. "In richness of flora also, the Alps must yield to their rivals. The azalea and rhododendron make the 'alpenrosen' seem humble, while there is nothing nearer home to compare with the gorgeous magnificence of the Caucasian tiger-lilies and bolly-hocks." (P. 451.)

* Both these summits, according to the measurements of the Russian engineers, exceed Mount Kazbek in height, Koschtantau rising to not less than 17,096 feet, and Dychttau to 16,925 feet above the sea. All the measurements of heights in the Caucasus will, however, require careful revision.

Nor is the Caucasus deficient in attractions of another kind. To the sportsman it offers an interesting and almost unexplored field. Bears abound in the forests, chamois are found among the highest mountains, and the bouquetin — now so nearly extinct in the Alps — is by no means rare in the Caucasus. Even the gigantic "aurochs" is to be met with in the forests and valleys west of Mount Elbruz. Pheasants, too, are still abundant on the banks of the river from which they derive their name — the Phasis, now called the Rion — and the quest of them in their native forests would afford sport of a very different kind from a Norfolk battue.

Of the inhabitants of these beautiful regions we have left ourselves little space to speak. It is hardly necessary to mention that the tribes that inhabit the Caucasus are among the most varied and multifarious to be found in any part of the world. Hence the traveller will find here in the highest degree the interest that attaches to a new and picturesque population, and will have the opportunity of making observations on races, whose origin and relations are still obscure. Mr. Freshfield has wisely refrained from entering into the complicated ethnographical questions connected with the Caucasian tribes; but his observations on the different races of mountaineers with whom he was necessarily brought in contact are valuable and interesting. On one point

his testimony is precise and unequivocal. The superiority of the Mahomedan tribes on the north side of the range — the Tartars of the Kabarda — over their southern neighbours, the so-called Christians of Mingrelia and Georgia, "is so marked that no honest traveller can pass it over in silence." (P. 456.) But he fairly observes that the Christianity of the tribes in question is of the most imperfect and degraded character. The Ossetes in particular appear to retain in great measure their primitive paganism "overlaid by a slight varnish of nominal Christianity." Of the character of the Suanetians we have already spoken; but it is fair to add that this is the only district in the Caucasus where the traveller now runs any risk of open robbery. Everywhere else the Russian authorities have established something like order and tranquillity; and there seems no doubt that the population has gained by the change. The state of disorganization produced in the Mingrelian districts by the temporary relaxation of the Russian rule during the Crimean War is described as deplorable, and threatened a complete relapse into their primitive barbarism. If the traveller in the Caucasus (as is not unfrequently the case) be at times offended with the stupidity or corruption of the Russian officials, he must not forget that, but for their presence, he would be unable to penetrate at all into the interior of the country.

ARRANGEMENTS have at length been made for reproducing in facsimile the famous "Mappa Mundi" in Hereford Cathedral. This most curious record of the state of geographical knowledge in the Middle Ages has hitherto received far greater attention from foreign than from English geographers and antiquaries. Recent researches have, indeed, modified some of the conclusions which the Vicomte de Santarem and M. d'Avezac had derived from their imperfect copies of the map, but the date assigned to it by the latter in his essays on the subject has been confirmed by a discovery lately made in the cathedral records. Arguing from the political divisions of France, Burgundy, and Flanders on the map, M. d'Avezac referred its execution to 1315 or thereabouts, and it has now been discovered that Richard de Haldingham, who, according to the coeval inscription, "lat fet e compesse" (i.e. l'a fait et compassé), held a prebendal stall at Hereford from 1290 to 1310. The map itself is familiar to every visitor of the cathedral. It represents the habitable earth as a circular island, surrounded by the ocean

stream. Jerusalem is placed in the centre. Asia occupies nearly the whole upper (or eastern) half of the circle, and Europe and Africa divide between them the other section. There are numerous inscriptions and illustrations scattered over the whole surface of the map, describing the products of the several countries, and occasionally their legends. Great Britain is, of course, delineated with especial minuteness, but though the names of many towns are given, the only hill to which any designation is attached is the Clec Hill — *Mo's Clec*. Haldingham, as a native of Lincolnshire, had perhaps been struck with the bold outline of this ridge, which can be seen from the neighbourhood of Hereford.

Pall Mall Gazette.

M. GUIZOT's concluding series of Meditations, entitled "Christianity, in its Relation to the Present State of Society and of Opinion," will be published by Mr. Murray.

Part of an Edinburgh Review of Robinson's Parks and Gardens of Paris.

MUSHROOM CULTURE ON A LARGE SCALE.

A very interesting part of the book is that devoted to the market gardens of Paris. The account of the mushroom-culture is especially interesting. This is conducted in the caves of Montrouge — old deep quarry mines such as those of which we have already spoken, sixty or seventy feet underground, just outside the fortifications on the south side of Paris. It is long since the growing of mushrooms in cellars has been practised in our country. We remember how successful the good old Lord Murray was in his experiments in this way in one of his own coal cellars in Edinburgh — a very convenient thing for one who understood the art of giving dinners so well and practised it so freely. But the caverns of Montrouge are rather large cellars. There six or seven miles' run of mushroom beds occupy one part of the mines, in other parts of which the quarrymen are still at work. The soil is merely little heaps of the siftings of the stone (gypsum) mixed with stable manure. The place is warm and dry, and secure from all invasion of cold or variation of temperature which is no doubt one of the chief causes of its success. These caves not only supply the wants of the city above them, but those of England and other countries also; large quantities of preserved mushrooms being exported, one house alone sending to our own country no less than 14,000 boxes annually. The following is an extract from Mr. Robinson's account of his visit to the caves.

"The passages are narrow, and occasionally we have to stoop. On each hand there are little narrow beds of half-decomposed stable manure, running all along the wall. These have been made quite recently, and have not yet been spawned. Presently we arrive at others in which the spawn has been placed and is 'taking' freely. The spawn in these caves is introduced to the little beds by means of flakes taken from an old bed, or still better, from a heap of stable manure in which it occurs naturally. Such spawn is preferred, and considered much more valuable than that taken from old beds. Of spawn in the form of bricks, as in England, there is none. M. Champignoniste pointed with pride to the way in which the flakes of spawn had begun to spread through the little beds, and passed on, sometimes stooping very low to avoid the pointed stones in the roof, to where the beds were in a more advanced state. Here we saw little smooth putty-coloured ridges running along the sides of the passages; and wherever the rocky subway became as wide as a small bedroom, two or three little beds were

placed parallel to each other. These beds were new, and dotted all over with mushrooms no bigger than sweet-pea seeds, and affording an excellent prospect of a crop. Be it observed, that these beds contain a much smaller body of manure than is ever the case in our gardens. They are not more than twenty inches high, and about the same width at the base; whilst those against the sides of the passages are not so large as those shaped like little potato pits, and placed in the open spaces. The soil, with which they are covered to the depth of about an inch, is nearly white, and is simply sifted from the rubbish of the stone-cutters above, giving the recently-made bed the appearance of being covered with putty. Although we are from seventy to eighty feet below the surface of the ground, everything looks very neat; in fact, very much more so than could have been expected, not a particle of litter being met with. A certain length of bed is made every day in the year, and as they naturally finish one gallery or series of galleries at a time, the beds in each have a similar character. . . . The beds remain in good bearing generally about two months, but sometimes last twice and three times as long. . . . Once more we plunge into a passage as dark as ink, and find ourselves between two lines of beds in full bearing, the beautiful white button-like mushroom appearing everywhere in profusion along the sides of the diminutive beds, something like the drills which farmers make for green crops. As the proprietor goes along, he removes sundry bunches that are in perfection, and leaves them on the spot, so that they may be collected with the rest for to-morrow's market. He gathers largely every day, occasionally sending more than 400 pounds' weight per day — the average being about 300 pounds. A moment more, and we are in an open space — a sort of chamber, say twenty feet by twelve — and here the little beds are arranged in parallel lines, an alley of not more than four inches separating them, the sides of the beds being literally covered with mushrooms." (P. 475.)

"We will next visit a mushroom cave of another type, at some little distance from the city. It is situated near Frepillon Mery-sur-Oise, a place which may be reached in an hour or so by the Chemin de fer du Nord, passing by Enghien, the Valley of Montmorency, and Pontoise, and alighting at Auvers. There are vast quarries in the neighbourhood, both for building stone and the plaster so largely used in Paris. The materials are not quarried in the ordinary way by opening up the ground, nor by the method employed at Montrouge and elsewhere in the suburbs of Paris, but so that the interior of the earth looks like a vast gloomy cathedral. In 1867, the culture was in full force at Mery, and as many as 3000 pounds a day were sometimes sent from thence to the Paris market; but the mushroom is a thing of peculiar taste, and these quarries are now empty — cleaned and left to rest. After a time, the great quarries seem to become tired of their

occupants, or the mushrooms become tired of the air; the quarries are then well cleaned out, the very soil where the beds rested being scraped away, and the space left to recruit itself for a year or two. In 1867, M. Renaudot had the extraordinary length of over twenty-one miles of mushroom beds in one great cave at Mery; last year there were sixteen miles in one cave at Frepillon." (P. 478.)

Mr. Robinson, with his eye ever open to utilizing the processes he meets with, turns his thoughts here too, to his own country. "Is it possible that in a great mining and excavating country we cannot establish the same kind of industry?" The experiment could easily be tried, and no doubt will be tried, by some one of the numerous readers that will study Mr. Robinson's book. It appears, however, that one great field of possible operation has at once to be eliminated:—

"I was informed that coal mines are not adapted for growing mushrooms, and the smallest particle of iron in the beds of manure is avoided by the spawn, a circle round it remaining inert. It is said to be the same with coal. If an evil-disposed workman wishes to injure his employer, he has only to slip along by the beds with a pocketful of rusty old nails, and insert one here and there." (P. 483.)

But we suspect there is another requisite which will also be difficult to attain in this country—dryness. Mushrooms require moisture, but not too much of it. The caves in which they grow at Paris are absolutely dry, and barrels of water have to be provided to give them the necessary waterings. Most of our mines are more or less wet under foot. Excavations in chalk would be almost the only ones that would be suitable in this respect.

Tobacco Smoking.—Tobacco smokers must look to their eyes. Proofs are accumulating that blindness, due to slowly progressive atrophy of the optic nerves, induced by smoking, is of frequent occurrence. In one of the volumes of the "London Hospital Reports," Mr. Jonathan Hutchinson has narrated several cases of amaurosis, the histories of which go far to establish the fact that in each case the blindness was brought on by that rapidly increasing and, as it appears, baneful habit; and in the *Medical Times and Gazette*, Sept. 4, the same distinguished surgeon has described another striking case of "tobacco amaurosis, ending in absolute blindness, induced in eighteen months." The patient, aged fifty, a railway clerk, enjoyed good sight until January, 1867, and excellent general health, with the exception of a single attack of gout. "For twenty years he had never been under medical care," and excepting the optic atrophy, no cerebral symptoms were observable. After leaving off smoking entirely for a whole year, no apparent benefit was experienced. "For ten years before his failure of sight, he had been a pledged teetotaller, had never at any time been intemperate, and continued his abstinent habits during the whole period of treatment. He is a remarkably intelligent man; was in former life a great reader," and, says Mr. Hutchinson, "he tells me that since his affliction he has been acquainted with the particulars of many similar cases." "I have been astonished," he says, "to find that it is not the fast livers that it takes. It is usually the hard-workers and abstemious." He is strongly impressed with the belief that both in

his own case and in that of most others he has seen, smoking was the real cause. I wish to ask especial attention to the fact that the man was smoking heavily, whilst taking no kind of alcoholic stimulant. I have met with several cases in which this history was given, and am decidedly of opinion that the injurious influence of tobacco is to some extent counteracted by alcohol." We can readily assent to Mr. Hutchinson's opinion, which, indeed, does but confirm the proverb, "One evil brings another," for we have long been convinced that great tea and coffee drinkers may persist in their habit the more recklessly the more freely they indulge in drinking alcohol also. — *Medical Mirror*.

FRENCH literature owes something to the Abbé Denys. He is well known for his life of the Abbé Liotard—a man who kept his independence under the first Empire, and who gave effective help in upsetting the ministry of De Cazes. The Abbé Denys has since published a series of *Lives of the French Prelates from the Concordat*. The public have now from his pen an account of his mission in the Tuileries in 1848. The wounded and dying, after the fight at the palace, refused religious aid from the Chaplain of Queen Amélie, and from a Jesuit who offered himself. They, so to speak, elected the Abbé Denys by acclamation. The narrative of what passed amid dying, dead, and the silent living is a chapter in the history of the Tuileries which it did not before possess.

IV.*

Per me si va nell' eterno dolore.

DANTE: *Divina Commedia*.

The Souwanoff palace had been reopened in the beginning of October. The Herculean Swiss in his heavy furs had resumed his place at the main entrance, and in his peculiarly dignified way answered the numerous questions asked him, as to the Princess being visible or not. The cause of this unusually early return to the city was the expected arrival of the Princess' granddaughter, Countess Alexandrina Alexandrowna Kuriakin. The young Countess had spent several years at a "pension" in Paris, in order to finish her education, i. e., to perfect herself in playing on the piano, and to acquire some five or six languages. She had been the pride and admiration of the institute; at the examinations she had always carried off the first prizes, and her graceful, elegant carriage was an honor to the prevailing "ton" of the establishment. After the death of Count Kuriakin, her stepmother had taken her away from Paris, and spent most of the time with her at Nice and Florence alternately, the physicians having recommended the milder southern climate to the Count's widow. The fondness, which Alexandrina had formerly manifested for her father's second wife, appeared to be of a less ardent nature; at all events she expressed no regret whatever at their separation, when Princess Souwanoff wrote, that she desired her granddaughter to pass the winter with her at Petersburg, partly, that she might not be entirely estranged from her brother, who in spite of his extreme youth had by the will of his father been made the guardian of his sister; and partly, because she was to be presented at court and introduced into the circles, in which Countess Alexandrina Alexandrowna would have to select her future husband.

The health of the mother did not permit her to spend the winter in Russia. Alexandrina, together with her lady-companion and maid, was therefore placed under the protection of a family nearly related to her, which was expected to return home at the commencement of the season. Princess Souwanoff looked forward to her granddaughter's arrival with feelings of a conflicting nature. She had been very fond of the helpless child, whom she had brought up after the death of her own daughter. When Count Kuriakin, after his second marriage, had asked to take little Alexandrina back into his own family, the tie

existing between grandmother and granddaughter had been gradually loosened. The short visits of a few days or weeks had not sufficed to restore the old cordial relations between them. The Princess had an instinctive antipathy to everything bordering on pretence and insincerity, and in Alexandrina's disposition, despite all the seductive charms of her amiability, there lurked a vein of calculating premeditation, which caused others to doubt the fervor and truthfulness of her sentiments. The letters, which she wrote while at the boarding-school, — very spirited and amusing letters otherwise, in no way betraying the proverbial verandry of the young "demoiselles de pension" — overflowed with tender effusions and intense longings, and complaints at the direful necessity of being separated from her grandmother. The latter would silently fold up these epistles and hand them to Clemence for perusal; the two rarely entered into a closer discussion of the same, because both felt that one thing was wanting, — the simple language of the heart, that goes to the heart. She was very young yet, scarcely nineteen; her mental development must naturally be incomplete, and a favorable influence of the most beneficial consequence. Of her remarkable beauty her likeness gave incontrovertible proof, likewise the private communication of the step-mother, who, as the Princess inclined to believe, laid far too great a stress upon externals.

She arrived at last. Nicolai had gone to meet her at the frontier, in order to conduct her in person to the grandmother. Light-footed as a fairy, she ran up the broad staircase in her heavy travelling attire, threw her arms round the grandmother's neck, and said smilingly: "Here I am — mamma sends her best compliments," just as if she had just returned from a little excursion, instead of an absence of several years.

She greeted Clemence, who was a stranger to her, with much affability and kindness, saying with a playful smile:

"I know you are the key to grandmamma's heart, and I shall take good care to be on the best of terms with you."

"Not a very onerous task, I trust," Nicolai interrupted her impatiently, visibly out of humor. Alexandrina cast a quick, sharp glance — such as one might hardly have looked for from such a pair of smiling eyes — at her brother and Clemence, while a slight expression of scorn played about her lips.

She was handsome, remarkably hand-

[* Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1889, by Littell & Gay in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.]

some! Still her beauty had nothing girlish in it, it was rather that of a seductive young woman. Her black, fine-drawn eye-brows and lashes, lending a dark lustre to her fiery blue eyes, contrasted strangely with the ringlets of gold-brown hair, which encircled the lovely face in rich profusion. The soft rounded forms of the graceful figure and their undulating motions made her resemble a full-blown flower, that has but just burst the leaves, which confined the bud. Everything in and about her was ready and complete—even her manners. Unembarrassed, free, without a shadow of that nestling timidity, which would have appeared perfectly natural in a girl of her age.

What it was that kept her a stranger to all, it was difficult to say. She was always and evenly amiable and of cheerful temper, she had a kind word for every one, and yet there was an indescribable something between her and her nearest and dearest friends. Nicolai said one day, shortly after Alexandrina's arrival, to Clemence:

"Alexandrina is a thorough coquette, that I can see far more plainly than you, although I am a man and both younger and more inexperienced. The conviction alone, that she has a moderately warm heart, assures me, that we shall not have a second Madame de Santos in our family."

Clemence could not but agree with him in feeling; involuntarily the thought occurred to her, that this display of amiability was merely the grand rehearsal for the coming magnificent performance in the great world.

Soon after Alexandrina's arrival the Princess fell sick; not dangerously, her disease being a purely nervous one, which simply required great care and absolute rest. She regretted it very much, that this disagreeable interruption should happen just at the time, when she desired to bring the young girl out in society herself. She had already been presented at Court and added to the list of the Empress' maids-of-honor. The Empress had received her most graciously, and with kindly interest inquired after the health of the Princess. The season proper had not commenced yet, since many of the families were in the habit of leaving their estates some weeks later. The *salons* of some of the palaces were however gradually being thrown open, and smaller soirées became the forerunners of the larger routs and balls. Inasmuch as Alexandrina could not take part in these entertainments alone, and on the other hand did not wish to forego them, Princess Kulowski, the niece of Princess Souwanoff, offered to chaperon her as *dame d'honneur*.

Clemence stayed at home to take care of the sick lady; she preferred not to go into society, which had little attraction for her. She had for some time been without news from Henrick, but expected him to arrive at Petersburg almost any day. He had written in his last letter, that he should not go into the apartments offered him by the Grand-Duke, but procure himself an establishment of his own. Of other plans he had said nothing, save mentioning, that he intended to give a concert. He judged the higher Russian society very correctly. "Last winter," he said, "I was a novelty and therefore interesting; people were satisfied to see a person, who differed from the ordinary species. They did not clamor for the artist—they were content with Baron von Berg-Harden. On my next visit, I shall appear to them as one seen before and 'connu,' and if I do not want to disappear entirely unnoticed among the be-starred and be-spangled crowd, I must try to achieve a lasting success." Clemence agreed with him in this; she had sufficiently observed that, and how soon people are set aside and forgotten in Petersburg.

The first meeting between her and Henrick, for which her soul had longed with undiminished intensity, was but a hurried one after all. She could not leave the sick-room very long, and he was busily occupied with the preparations for his concert. Nevertheless she felt happy, when he held her in his arms and stroked her soft hair; so happy in fact, that a sort of emotion came over even him and he whispered:

"Clemence, you are good as the angels—I do not deserve so self-sacrificing a love."

She dreamed the happiest of dreams. He had clung to her, he had come back—her fate was at last to be decided. Two beings, such as they, needed no outward tie. Henrick was too candid, too noble, for her to ask a promise from him.

Von Harden's concert was originally intended to be given at the Italian opera, an uncommonly lively interest on the part of the public being expected. The house however could only be obtained for that purpose during Lent, when the theatrical performances were entirely suspended. The large and splendid hall, in which the Casino of the nobility held its meetings, was readily placed at his disposal. The tickets were quickly taken. The Court appeared, and with it the whole of the highest aristocracy, who counted the celebrated artist as "one of them." Beautiful women in elegant toilets, gentlemen in uniform and profusely covered with decorations, made a

most brilliant audience for him. Among the numerous beauties from ever so many countries, none however shone more gloriously and resplendently, than Countess Alexandrina Kuriakin. Admiring glances followed her, when she walked to the further end of the hall by the side of Princess Kulowski. She was curious, nay anxious, to get a glimpse at last of the great artist, whose name had frequently been mentioned at parties and soirées, and whom she had not yet been able to meet anywhere. She knew, that he was a frequent visitor also at her house, that he was even a friend of Clemence's; but the illness of the Princess prevented the resumption of reception-nights. She had often said to herself with an increasing impatience, that her grandmother's illness was a most unfortunate accident, and interfered sadly with her enjoyments in social life.

The Russians are as easily excited a public as the Italians, and it does by no means run counter to good breeding and "*haut ton*," to give a noisy expression to one's enthusiasm and delight. The Russian aristocracy does not receive an artist with that dignified and cool reserve, which is "*de rigueur*" in other large capitals; they give vent to their feelings as loudly, as does the "pit" in a theatre. The loud applause and the never-ending call, which followed every single performance, were something entirely new to von Harden. In him centred the chief attraction of the evening. His masterly play, whose fire and animation found a corresponding sentiment in the easily excited minds of his hearers, far exceeded the general expectation. Even the much esteemed and excellent members of the Italian opera-troupe, whose co-operation he owed to the protection of the Grand-Duke, received only a *succès d'estime*. They were listened to, because they performed a portion of the programme.

Alexandrina, in her capacity of maid-of-honor to the Empress, occupied a seat on the estrade adjoining the Imperial box. She was at a short distance from the performing artists. When Henrick, in the course of his repeated performances, began to look for familiar faces among the audience, the beautiful girl seated next to Princess Kulowski, dressed in a pink moiré silk, with rose-buds in her glossy gold-brown hair, did not escape his searching glances. Princess Kulowski smiled at him, when she caught his eye; he was a frequent guest at the Dawidoff palace. Alexandrina, whose long eye-lids were dreamily drooping, gave him a timid and yet longing look, which aroused his curiosity. Involuntarily his

eyes returned to the charming maid-of-honor again and again — for as such he recognized her by the golden cipher, worn on a white satin bow on the left shoulder, bearing the initials of the Empress' name — and a secret intelligence seemed to spring up between them. When he was overwhelmed by a shower of applause and bowed his thanks, it was to her he returned them. The Imperial family sat close by, and hence it became a matter of course, that he should bow in that direction. Her little hands fairly twitched with impatience to join in the clapping, — but a "*demoiselle d'honneur*" dared not venture so far. She therefore contented herself with pressing her pretty face into the fragrant bouquet she held in her hands, as if wishing to convey to him the assurance, that she was delighted; at the same time she made him a scarcely noticeable sign with her eyes, which might be interpreted to mean: "I should be but too happy to throw you these flowers, reserving one only as a remembrance of this evening."

Countess Alexandrina was of an extraordinarily inventive turn of mind, and knew exceedingly well, how to fascinate and attract a man. She was at that moment simply following the impulse of her warm nature, without the least admixture of coquetry. The noble, distinguished bearing of Baron von Harden charmed her, the comparisons which she drew between him and the courtiers present on that occasion, were decidedly in his favor. After the concert, she accompanied Princess Kulowski to the latter's palace, in order to pass with her the rest of the evening, which had already lasted to a very late hour. Other friends and visitors made their appearance, and in a very short time a pretty large circle had gathered round the tea-table.

Alexandrina was the centre of the homages from old and young, and received them with charming self-possession and merriment. The highly interesting question was brought up, what qualifications she looked for in a husband, and what he must be or do to please her. The other young girls present made merry over the discussion, and named a variety of qualities, which they thought Alexandrina might be likely to exact.

"Rank and wealth?" said the young Countess, "they are simply indispensable and a matter of course. Beauty in a man is absolutely ridiculous; still I want him to look well enough to be noticed at once on entering a room, without being taken for a tutor or a footman. At the same time he must have spirit, a high order of intellect and cultivation, lest I should be heartily '*ennuyée*' in my own house, which ought

to be the one, in which I should reign supreme."

"You are forgetting the main point," said Count Dawidoff jestingly. "I should think, you would want to be loved above everything else."

"Loved?" she retorted sneeringly, throwing back her proud little head. "I am no sentimental German girl, and consider it a decided inconvenience for a married couple, to be in love with one another. All I expect of my husband would be, that he should treat me politely and considerately before others."

Henrick had been an ear-witness of this amusing little scene, having entered the room softly and paid his respects to Princess Kulowski alone, who, together with some older ladies, had withdrawn to a farther corner of the hall.

"Who is the young lady that expresses such remarkably sound views?" he asked with a smile.

"My niece, the grand-daughter of Princess Souwanoff. Let me introduce you to Countess Alexandrina Alexandrowna."

Alexandrina blushed on finding herself suddenly face to face with von Harden. With the *aplomb* of a woman of the world she soon however overcame her slight embarrassment, and, beckoning him to her side, she thanked him by words and looks for the admirable entertainment he had made her enjoy. To Henrick it seemed as if he were suddenly transplanted into a dazzling scene of a lovely fairy-tale; he would not have been a man or an artist, had he not been captivated by this enchanting beauty. She understood how to ensnare him and to monopolize his attention. The rest of the company did no longer exist for her, from the moment that he had taken a seat near her. If any other gentleman dared to address her she frowned at him, and the venturesome culprit had nothing left but to retire in silence. It would have been difficult to say, what she was so eagerly conversing about all the time. She touched lightly on a great many subjects; now she was in Paris, then in Italy, at her "pension" next, where she had led a life of wretched monotony, and finally she described her first evening at the salon "Herz," where she had listened to some of the most celebrated virtuosi. Henrick's variable nature appeared almost dull and clumsy compared with that of this playful and sparkling young creature. It sounded very sweet to him to hear her whispering in his ear, when he lifted her into her carriage:

"You will doubtless be at the Nachimoff's

to-morrow night? I am going there with Princess Kulowski."

He had not had the least intention of accepting the invitation to that ball — now he could not think of staying away. Alexandrina would have called him rude, if he had not gone.

"I am not a dancer, Countess," he said, when, after the first salutations were over, she handed him her card.

"Why do you go to balls then?"

He smiled.

"In order to see."

She made a gesture of half impatience.

"I am in fact too old to dance."

"Too old? Most of our young cavaliers do not look a bit younger than you."

"Nevertheless the grey hairs are there," — and he negligently pushed his dark rich hair back from his high forehead.

"I can discover none," she replied after having given him a long searching glance. "I see neither wrinkles nor grey hairs; but I have reserved at least one dance for you," she added coaxingly.

"An honor which I fully appreciate. I know of but one escape."

"Which is?"

"That you graciously absolve me from dancing, and content yourself with my entertaining you as best I can. I promise you to make every effort not to weary you."

She nodded with an expression of entire satisfaction and handed him the gold pencil, that he might himself put down his name opposite the dance reserved for him.

Soon after, she was floating by him leaning on the arm of an officer of the Gardes à cheval, merrily chatting with her partner, who bore one of the most aristocratic names in the city. Now and then she would cast a hurried glance at von Harden, whose eyes followed the graceful form wherever she went. He was *distract*, lost in thought. He did not notice, that Count Nicolai, who danced little and conversed for the most part with the older gentlemen present, returned his bow coolly and stiffly. When Henrick politely inquired of him, if Princess Souwanoff would soon be able to receive him, the young man promptly replied, that he would have to forego that pleasure for some time yet and that even Mdle. d'Orville was not able to see anybody at present. At any other time the Count's manner would have struck him as being very singular. That night he did not mind it; he was anxiously waiting for the beginning of the dance, which Alexandrina had promised him. The quadrille had just been finished and the Countess dismissed her cavalier with a curtsy, at which the long

train of her gold-embroidered dress described a wide circle on the highly polished floor of the dancing-hall. Baron von Harden offered her his arm, to lead her from the heat and crowd of the room into an adjoining salon, where they could take rest and converse undisturbedly.

"Are you not going to dance?" asked one of the older ladies, greatly astonished at seeing them take a seat before a table covered with books and albums.

"No," replied Alexandrina, languidly unfolding her fan, "the heat of the room has tired me much — I need some rest."

Henrick kept his promise. The young girl had never listened to a more sparkling and spirited conversation, nor had Henrick ever had a more attentive or more charming listener. She agreed fully with Madame de Santos, who declared the Baron to be the most interesting man in all the salons of St. Petersburg. And Madame de Santos' opinion was law on matters of this nature, resting, as it did, on an experience of many years. With a peevish look and a long-drawn regretful "Already?" which was extremely flattering to Henrick, Alexandrina walked off at last with the happy partner of the next dance, who had searched for her everywhere in utter despair. She forgot to take her beautiful bouquet with her, whose wonderful composition betrayed a Parisian origin.

Henrick picked it up in order to return it to its lawful owner by-and-by. He seemed to indulge in botanical studies, so attentively did he examine every single flower. In the course of the evening they found but few brief chances of speaking together, they kept up a certain *rappor*t however, and contrived to meet each other frequently.

Late at night, after Alexandrina had already dismissed her maid, Clemence entered her room. She found the young Countess sitting before her toilet-table, apparently lost in thought. Her *peignoir* had slipped back and allowed her white arms and her beautiful neck to be seen; her long hair was hanging down loose and in charming disorder. She leaned her head on her hand, while a dreamy smile was playing about her rosy lips. She gave a sudden start, when Clemence touched her shoulder.

"You here at this late hour? You look very pale — is the Princess worse?"

"No. She was very restless. I had to read to her until now. It was only when I heard your carriage, that I became aware of the lateness of the hour. I wished to say good-night to you. Did you spend a pleasant evening?"

"A very pleasant one," she replied in a tone, which sounded very strange to the ear of her interlocutor.

"It was a splendid entertainment, I have no doubt. Were many of our acquaintances there?"

Alexandrina gave the names of several, mentioning that of Baron von Harden last.

"Von Harden!" suddenly exclaimed Clemence. Recovering herself in an instant, she added more calmly: "I was not aware of his going to balls. He used to have an intense dislike for such entertainments."

"So he told me. He remarked however, that the free and easy tone in our society, which obliged no one to appear at a stated hour or to come at all, if he chose to stay away, had reconciled him with salon-life."

"Very likely," said Clemence abstractedly. "I must say good-night, Alexandrina, it is getting very late."

She kissed the young girl and left the room. Arrived at her own, she wandered about for a long while after. Not that a feeling of jealousy had come over her — no, she herself admired with the eye of an artist Alexandrina's resplendent beauty, at the same time thinking too highly of Henrick, to suppose, that he could allow himself to be captivated so easily.

But in her heart of hearts she felt sad, very sad. He had but to say one word and the uncertainty of her position, which became more and more oppressive every day, would have been brought to an end. True enough, she knew too well, that that very word would cost him much! Free and unrestrained as he was living now, he shrank from the determination to bind himself to even the best beloved being on earth! She would not admit to herself, that there was an unmitigated egotism at the bottom of this; he had sought her love, he demanded full and unlimited confidence from her, but would not sacrifice his own comfort in the least. Her soul yearned for him notwithstanding! She could not conceive, how she had been able to bear the three years, during which no intelligence, no sign from him had reached her. From the fullness and strength of her own love she judged of his. Poor Clemence!

Baron von Harden meanwhile was in a frame of mind, from which his servants had to suffer much. He railed and was angry at himself, for allowing himself to be disturbed by the pretty face of a child, now that his stormy youth had left him, and he had grown to be a staid and sober man. A child she could hardly be called; Alexan-

drina combined the merry *insouciance* of a child, with the self-possessed *aplomb* of a woman of the world — a mixture, which was entirely new to Henrick. Had he lived longer at Petersburg, he would have known, that there are no "children" at all in the aristocratic circles, that one finds none but fully developed "little ladies," who even in their teens know exactly what they want. Indifferent as he felt about the worth of the good graces of the fair sex in general, yet did the evident distinction and preference with which the high-born, universally admired Countess Kuriakin treated him, excite a pleasing sensation in his heart. It was so pretty to see how her eyes brightened up when she met him, how she blushed when she spoke to him, making not the slightest effort to conceal the naive and undisguised affection she felt for him. Her sweet disposition, entirely free from sentimentality, allowed him to enjoy a freedom and unrestraint, such as he had never experienced with Clemence. The latter was constantly calling his mental faculties into play, she was always clamoring for noble thoughts and intellectual activity, which tired and irritated him, while he felt all the time under the necessity of turning out the noblest side of his character in her sight.

He cast a retrospective glance at his past life. He had married without love, and yet had never been what might be called unhappy. Extraordinary circumstances indeed had combined to grant him unlimited freedom, even in the married state. The first real conflict had come with Clemence, and even this had gradually died out without disturbing his domestic peace and quietness. He saw nothing he need reproach himself with. He judged people by himself; if he felt no pain, how was it possible that others could suffer; and if he did, who bore the blame?

He was kind, had a warm, sympathetic nature — how often had he been told this! — He only disliked to recognize any duties, or to bring any sacrifices as far as his heart was concerned. What had he to say to Clemence? He could hardly see her alone, while the Princess was sick. And to write these things was hardly feasible or appropriate. Hence it was best to let them quietly develop themselves. The freakish preference, with which Alexandrina favored him, could only be of short duration. Why should he not permit himself to be adored by the handsomest girl in town, the young Countess Kuriakin? Who could blame him for it?

Princess Souwanoff recovered slowly. As soon as her strength would allow her,

she received visitors and gathered larger circles of friends around her at night. Baron von Berg-Harden had called once and expressed his joy at seeing her so well again. He had also called upon Clemence, who however had been accidentally absent from home.

The Princess watched with increasing solicitude and apprehension the three young hearts confided to her. Clemence was silent; she did not complain, she appeared not oppressed, but she lacked that cheerful glimmer of hope, which had lighted up her face shortly after Henrick's return. Nicolai was gloomy and the relation between him and his sister seemed to be devoid of all sincere cordiality. Alexandrina, for her part, floated on the waves of the social life of which she was the undisputed Queen. Her features had assumed a warmer and deeper expression, which greatly enhanced her beauty. For the first time in her life a ray of true feeling was discernible. The Princess pondered and pondered over the cause of that feeling. Since she could not yet go into society with her grand-daughter, she was ignorant of the influences which had affected her. From Nicolai, who pretended to be deeply engaged in his profession and studies, she could learn nothing. Clemence, in whose correct judgment she had always confided, had never left the sick-room. Nothing remained for her but to wait.

Baron von Harden dreaded a meeting with Clemence. He had an unconquerable aversion to scenes accompanied by tears and reproaches; and without such the meeting was not likely to pass off, — that he knew. He deemed it best gradually to bring about an estrangement, which would ultimately relieve the decisive step of much of its painfulness, and at the same time be less grievous to Clemence herself, for whom he felt a sincere affection. Between him and Alexandrina there existed certain undefined and undeveloped relations, which he did not clearly see through. They met almost daily at parties, at the opera, at concerts, and Alexandrina always adroitly contrived to have a few moments of quiet undisturbed conversation with him. The slyness which she manifested, in making these moments appear purely accidental, evinced a high order of diplomatic talent. They also met on other occasions. He knew at what hours Alexandrina used to take her walks in the summer-garden with her lady-companion, and he never failed to be there at those times. Utterly disregarding the good-natured old Frenchwoman, who bore the manifold whims and rudenesses of her young mistress with exem-

plary resignation, she, after the first salutations and a few formal questions were exchanged, would continue the conversation with Henrick in German or in English, of which languages her companion did not understand a syllable. If even this gentle restraint became troublesome to her, she would easily find some pretext for sending the old duenna away altogether. The footman would thus be the only one to follow the pair at a respectful distance, whilst they selected more especially those paths, in which they were sure not to meet anyone belonging to the court.

It were difficult to describe what strange thoughts were chasing each other in Alexandrina's little head. She loved Henrick as much as she was capable of loving; which means, that she did not allow herself to be prevented from accepting homages of all kinds, and that she would have been very wrathful, if these had been withheld. His commanding person struck her fancy, and awed her at the same time; with a secret joy, however, she relished the power she wielded over this reserved and proud man. He was the most interesting of all the suers for her hand. She longed to be married, in order to be independent, to have a house of her own. At Princess Souwanoff's she could not feel at home; there was a spirit pervading the house and its inmates, to which she would forever be a stranger. She had no superfluity of sentiment, but she felt bitterly not being treated with the greatest affection at all times. That Nicolai and Clemence were nearer and dearer than she to the Princess, that a band of sincere affection and unreserved confidence united those three, she had quickly seen soon after her arrival. In society she was admired and flattered; her own family, she considered, slighted her. Why, then, should she have any unnecessary regard for their opinions and wishes? That she would have to surmount the greatest obstacles in obtaining a consent to her marriage with Henrick, she plainly saw. Her brother was her guardian, in which capacity he had the undoubted right to withhold it. And he would do so—he disliked von Harden. Why, she could not discover. Even though her inventive spirit should succeed in overcoming all difficulties, would she be perfectly sure of Henrick? He loved her, *that* she was convinced of, it could not be otherwise; but even *he* had not come to a decisive declaration. She knew his aversion to whatever fetters or chains. He had often enough intimated it both in jest and in earnest. Her giddy little head estimated his character far more correctly, than did

Clemence. The latter, in the very abundance of her love, had no eyes for his weaknesses; Alexandrina measured him by her own narrow standard and arrived at a passionless opinion of him. She had found out that Henrick, despite all his vaunted indifference to the world's opinion, laid great stress upon the same notwithstanding; that in spite of all his sneers at the prestige of nobility and social distinctions, he was yet keenly sensible of the advantages of a great name and an exalted position. The force of circumstances found him very plastic and flexible, and he allowed himself to be influenced by them all the more, the more jealous care he took of avoiding every direct personal conflict. The most brilliant powers of persuasion of a single individual would have availed nothing with him; but he cowed before the "on dits" of society. He was not the strong, iron character he pretended to be; with circumspection and cool calculation he could easily be controlled. He was not dreading the *fact* of being governed so much, as he did the form. Ardently as Alexandrina's heart beat for him, she did not for a moment lose her coolness and presence of mind. Above all else, she must try to compel Henrick to speak; for the rest she would find a plausible expedient. His word, once given to Countess Kuriakin, he would make good, even though it were to cost him his happiness; that she was confident of. At this thought she cast a smiling glance into the mirror opposite. That probable unhappiness would come to him in a most seductive form, at all events!

Count Dawidoff had assembled his numerous friends to a great ball. Henrick remembered, that it was at his palace where he had first seen Clemence again. He found it a difficult task to recall the impression she had made upon him then; moreover he had no time given him to dwell long upon it, for Alexandrina had quickly drawn him into the conservatory, whose shades and freshness, as she said, would be a welcome relief to her eyes, dazzled by the resplendent light of the rooms. She was gently leaning on his arm, while they walked along the intricate rows of rare plants and exotics, she whispering sweet bits of frolicsome chit-chat in his ears. They stopped in front of a rare flower that had just opened its leaves. She wanted to have it, and he broke it to please her. Gratefully smiling, she raised her face to his; it was in such close proximity, a look at once so dreamy and longing met him from under her dark lashes,—it was but natural, that he bent down and kissed her! And she put her soft arms around his neck, uttering sweet

words of love, and repeating again and again, that she loved him, him alone! He pressed her to his heart — it might be only a lovely dream after all! They heard voices approaching, they must part quickly; one more kiss on her rich, flowing curls, and she glided from his side like a hunted doe. Henrick followed her with lingering steps. After the brief but sweet, intoxicating draught, a painful uneasiness came over him. What had he done! She was still so young, he had linked his fate to the caprice of a mere child! And Clemence — the Princess? His head was in a whirl — he saw no escape from this labyrinth. Just then Alexandrina floated past him in a dance, looking so happy, so radiantly beautiful — he forgot all, all — he was indeed to be envied the possession of this charming young creature!

Clemence sat at the piano in the blue room of the Souwanoff palace. She was alone, the Princess had driven out for the first time.

Her left hand supported the tired head with its heavy dark crown of braided hair, the long lashes were drooping over her eyes. She felt sick and heavy of heart. Vainly had she looked for Henrick's coming. He had not called, he had not even written to her — she did not know what to think of it. His silence troubled her. The Princess, who profoundly pitied the young girl, had urged her to bring on a decision; she had even offered her own mediation, in order to prevail upon Henrick to make their betrothal public.

Approaching hurried steps startled her. It was Nicolai, who entered the room pale and greatly excited. Before Clemence found time to inquire after the cause of his sudden appearance in such a state, he asked vehemently:

"Where is Alexandrina?"

"I suppose she is in her room; unless she has gone out with Mme. Laurent, to make some calls or purchases," she replied calmly.

Nicolai rang the bell impatiently.

"Is Countess Alexandrina Alexandrowna at home?" he asked, almost fiercely, of the servant, who answered the bell.

The answer was in the negative and at a gesture from Nicolai, Iwan beat a hasty retreat, conscious of a brewing storm.

"What has happened, Nicolai? What has excited you so?" Clemence asked in astonishment.

"What has happened?" he retorted bitterly. "Nothing except that the love-affairs of Countess Alexandrina Kuriakin are at this moment the chief topic of con-

versation in all the salons of the city; that I shall indeed exchange shots with Count S — to-morrow, but that it remains unfortunately too true for all that, that she meets Baron von Harden daily in the summer-garden."

"Von Harden? Alexandrina?" — exclaimed Clemence, looking fixedly at Nicolai. "It is impossible," she added, drawing a deep breath, "it cannot be."

"I wish I could doubt it. But I have the most convincing proofs."

"No," she exclaimed passionately, her tremulous voice expressive of unutterable grief, "no — not that — do not repeat those words, Nicolai. It must not be true, for I — I love him, and he has done nothing, to make me doubt his love in return."

"What do I hear, Clemence?" said the Count sadly. "You love him — *him*? You have given your noble, loving heart to him who did not deserve such a boon, who could betray you? While you pushed me from you, *me*, who have struggled with superhuman efforts to render myself worthy of you?"

Tears choked his voice; he had forgotten the sister, the family-honor — his uncontrollable boyish grief burst forth in irrepressible anguish. Clemence had covered her face with both her hands. It rang in her ears like the wild roar of the ocean — she heard not what Nicolai was saying, the terrible certainty alone stood before her in noon-day clearness; that Henrick had forsaken her, that she was alone once more! Her reason, her feelings seemed to be chilled to ice — she could not shed a tear. With him her whole world had crumbled to pieces, that bright fairy-like world she had built on and around him, into which she had carried everything noble and elevating her soul and imagination had suggested to her! And this time, alas! never to be reared again! What had the work of years availed her? With an honest purpose she had tried to free herself from the ban, with which he had surrounded her. He came, and her heart belonged to him in greater devotion and truer love than ever before! What was to be her support henceforth, — what could fill up her life in the future? Nothing, nothing remained — the rotten props had given way. Her own strength and energy, on which she had relied so firmly, caused her to smile disdainfully. It was all over with her, now that he had forsaken her, forsaken her a second time. A burning sensation of bitter shame came over her. Nicolai was right, she had wasted, thrown away the rich treasures of her heart; allowing

herself to be duped a second time, was a piece of folly, that merited derision. She conceived an utter disgust of the contemptible actions of men — they were all a lie! For whom he had forgotten and forsaken her, mattered not to her — be it Alexandrina or some other woman. But that he had purposely called forth and fed her love, that he had not dared to tell her the whole truth — that excited her bitterest indignation!

A long, long pause ensued. Nicolai had not the courage to go on, when he saw how deeply she was affected, how nervously she trembled in every part of her body. But she was strong, she could control herself, if it must be. She raised her head. Nicolai was frightened at the expression of her face. Years seemed to have swept over it in an instant.

"Tell me, Count Nicolai," she said with a feeble, toneless voice, "what you have heard about this affair, which cannot but deeply grieve the Princess, your grandmother. We must endeavor to break it to her as gently as possible."

"It was only to-day, that I heard at the English Club, what the outside world has long known. Count S—— seized the opportunity of revenging himself for a former insult upon this occasion. Evidently intending that I should hear it, he remarked in a scarcely subdued tone of voice to a friend, that it seemed, as if the Kuriakin had a *pronounced* predilection for art and artists; that Countess Alexandrina therefore was only conforming to the traditions of her family, if she bestowed her affections upon Baron von Harden, who was so ardent a lover, that he considered a temperature of twenty degrees of cold the most appropriate one for a meeting in the summer-garden. — I stood perfectly bewildered at first and could not believe my ears. The next thing I did, was to fling one of those epithets at him, which a man cannot pocket without a resolve to be revenged for it. The challenge was given on the spot, as I had expected. We shall fire shots at each other to-morrow; but before I do, I shall teach a certain German adventurer by means of a horse-whip, how an arrogance, such as he is guilty of, is usually punished in Russia."

"You would act very unwisely," was Clemence's cold reply. "Do not make use of a horse-whip. You ought not thus to insult your future brother-in-law."

"He — marry Alexandrina? Never! I have to dispose of her hand, and he is the last man in the world, to whom I shall give it."

"Do not give way to such unnecessary vehemence. You have no other choice left you. If her reputation has suffered — and I am afraid it has, else Count S—— would not dare to speak of Countess Kuriakin, the Empress' maid-of-honor, as he did — you cannot do otherwise than betroth her as soon as possible to Baron von Harden!"

"Never!" exclaimed Nicolai with increasing rage.

"Listen to me," said Clemence, putting her hand on his arm. "Do you think that I should plead for Harden, if it were not for the honor of the family, and the peace of Princess Souwanoff? Let us calmly weigh the circumstances. Society here is very lenient as regards the short-comings of women, because it believes that they concern the husband alone. With all the more rigor does it condemn young girls, who commit indiscretions of that nature. It is only after marriage that they are tolerated — according to the views commonly entertained here. You are obliged to take these two facts into account. If it become known what Alexandrina has done, her remaining in Petersburg will be impossible. The Empress does not forgive an offence against outward decorum in her maids-of-honor. Will you wait until the golden *chiffre* has been taken from Alexandrina? You have a personal dislike of Baron von Harden. That has nothing to do with it; enough, that Alexandrina loves him — and he her." She drew a deep sigh. "Even the doubt of the integrity of his character ought not to influence you in the least. It is all-important that she become his wife. He has not the rank of a Count, but his family is among the most prominent in his own country, and as an artist he is the peer of princes. Alexandrina would therefore make no *mésalliance*, if she married him."

It was sometime before Nicolai gave in to Clemence's incontrovertible arguments. It cost him a hard struggle to forego his own feelings of revenge against Harden. When however the first outburst of his ire was over, and calm reflection came uppermost, he could but admit, that there was only this one way of preventing an *éclat*. Clemence took it upon herself to prepare the Princess for it.

"You are the head of the family," she said. "If you give your consent, the Princess will not withhold hers."

"I must first see Alexandrina," replied Nicolai, sullenly.

"Do it without vehemence," admonished Clemence; "you might easily drive her to commit a rash act."

"Do you plead for her — you?"

"Yes, I," said Clemence wearily. "You had better learn from me how to bury fond hopes and dreams."

She stopped on seeing the servant enter, for whom Nicolai had sent. In answer to Nicolai's question, if he knew whither the Countess had gone in her carriage, he said, that the carriage had returned half an hour ago, that Mme. Lanrent had alighted, and the Countess driven off again. She had ordered the coachman to take her to the hotel Laufert in the Great Morskoi.

Clemence sprang to her feet.

"That is bad, indeed;" she said in an undertone. "Von Harden stops there. Could she have been indiscreet enough to —"

"My carriage! Quick!" shouted Nicolai.

"There can be no further doubt," continued Clemence. "Alexandrina has gone to him, probably, in order to get by her obstinacy a consent, which she could not have obtained by entreaties."

"The hotel is full of diplomatists and army-officers. The livery and coat-of-arms will be recognized at once, Alexandrina be seen — O Clemence, von Harden has come here to destroy your and our happiness!"

"Your unhappiness is not very great," she said harshly. "Alexandrina will henceforth wear a coronet of seven, instead of nine stars. But what are you going to do next?"

"Drive there, and —"

"And make a scene, which will render a compromise impossible? That must not be done. You must defer a meeting with Harden, until you have regained sufficient composure to hear him courteously. Do not forget, that he already belongs to your family. The most important point is, that Alexandrina leave Harden's room with decency. Princess Souwanoff and I must go for her, and he himself see her to the carriage. Then Alexandrina may return with the Princess, and I stay there to explain the needful to Harden. You need not look at me thus — I ought to take leave of him at least — their engagement must be made public this very night."

The Princess had just returned from her drive. Nicolai went to her, to inform her briefly of what had happened during her absence. She fully approved of Clemence's plan, and gave orders to the coachman at once, to drive to the Hotel Laufert.

"My poor, unhappy child," she said with tears in her eyes, to the young girl, who entered her room dressed for the drive. Clemence gently pushed her arms aside.

"Do not pity me, Princess — we have

other things to think of. The honor of your granddaughter must be saved. Do not mind your lady-companion at such a time."

The Princess looked at her with an expression of deep emotion and compassion. All her youth, all her freshness had disappeared from her countenance. Her features were unnaturally rigid and cold, her eyes had lost their lustre. It was but a breath that had passed over her — alas! it was the breath of despair and of death!

Baron von Harden was not in the best of humor that day. The servant in the ante-room listened tremblingly for another sound of the bell, that called him in to be scolded at anew. He shook reproaches off very easily indeed, but whenever his master was in a similar frame of mind, he did not like to come in contact with him, kind as he had been and was on other occasions.

Henrick was in so desponding a mood, that he had not felt the courage to meet Alexandrina in her walks. He was still undecided what to do. At one time he concluded to write to Clemence, frankly telling her, what must separate them forever. Then he would think of her sad, reproachful eyes, and it touched him like a faint sensation of remorse at probably having disturbed her dearly-bought peace of mind. At another time he resolved to leave Petersburg, but Alexandrina's image rose up before him, imploring and seductive. He was extremely gloomy and low-spirited; he tried to write, to play — it was no use. With contracted brow he stood there, leaning his elbow on the mantel, staring into the fire. Was his whole life to be frittered away in never-ending conflicts and excitements? A slight noise roused him from his reveries. He turned round, and started back with amazement.

"Henrick!"

"Alexandrina!" His voice sounded harsh, the look he gave her was icy-cold. He was angry at her at that moment, for a single instant sufficed with him to foresee the consequences of her thoughtless imprudence.

"O Henrick, be kind to me or I shall be afraid."

"What possessed you to come here?"

"Then I may stay, to make my apology?" And with a quick graceful movement she doffed her elegant furs. She looked unspeakably lovely. The violet-colored velvet-dress showed the white charmingly rounded neck and arm to great advantage — a golden diadem encircled her glossy long curls. Her eyes looked up at him in contrite devotion.

"Have you come to let me admire your beautiful dress?"

"No indeed!" she said merrily. "How dreadfully obtuse men are, when women like to give them a proof of their own cunning. Do not you see the golden *chiffre*? Nothing remained for me, in order to deceive Mme. Laurent who has begun to suspect me, but to pretend a private reception at the winter-palace. This little pretext gives you the felicity of receiving me here *en grande tenue*."

Seeing that the frown on his forehead still remained, she went on coaxingly:

"I had not seen you for several days. You did not come to the summer-garden at the accustomed hours. The foolish thought occurred to me, that you did not love me any longer. I felt a secret, irresistible longing and — here I am. Would you chide me, for having set aside all outward regards from affection for you? Do give me your hand at least, and do not be so stern and rude. Here I am still standing at the door. You might at least ask me to take a seat."

No man, least of all one of as passionate a nature as Henrick's, could have resisted her half-timid, half-bantering smile. He went up to her; she put her little head on his shoulder and softly whispered:

"Now I am satisfied and can go back, knowing that you are still loving your little Alexandrina."

"No, do not go yet. Now that you have come, you may as well linger a moment," he said tenderly, leading her to the sofa. He stood before her with his arms folded. The glare of the fire fell upon her, imparting a warmer glow to her cheeks.

"I must watch over you, Alexandrina. You must never be so imprudent again. There are a good many people stopping here, who know you. Your carriage at the door might —"

"I left that waiting for me at the next corner, and came here on foot. I hardly think people have recognized me in this thick veil."

"No matter. What would the Princess or your brother think of me, if they knew that you were here with me in my room."

"I do not care what they think," she replied, proudly tossing her little head. "They do not love me, why should I mind their wishes? They think a great deal more of grave Clemence."

"Clemence?" His eyes grew dark in an instant. "Are you never grave?"

"No," was her candid reply. "To me it is synonymous with gloom and I love light — light and freedom!" She put her arm around his neck. "Henrick, you must

not expect that of me. Is it my fault, that I look upon life as a pleasure-tour, not as a lesson?"

"How do you picture our future life to yourself?"

His hands were playing with her hair, as he appeared to him as a frolicsome sunbeam.

"As a very agreeable and brilliant one! We shall spend our winters in Paris, for there alone do people know how to enjoy themselves. You give a concert occasionally, in order that all the women may envy me for being your wife. Our salon shall be the centre of all that is *spirituel*, handsome and aristocratic. When you are grave, I shall stay away from you; but when you want rest and recreation, you shall come to me. Alexandrina will always know how to amuse you, how to smoothe the wrinkles on your forehead, as I am doing now." And she passed her small white hand over the wrinkle, which was still frowning from between his eye-brows. He took the small white hand and kissed it. He began to think himself, that they would indeed lead a charming life. The lovely little creature would adorn his life like a tasteful arabesque, without laying claim to the whole of its substance.

He listened eagerly as she went on, unfolding enchanting pictures of their future. Yes, they were made for each other — they were perfectly matched. Alexandrina loved him, yet she did not expect him to sacrifice his entire self to this love. With a gentle but firm hand, she drew a line across their lives, beyond which he was to enjoy full freedom. That it was, which he had always looked for and but partly realized in his first marriage, of which small part he retained a pleasing remembrance even now.

What Madame von Berg had once told Clemence, that she required no high-strained sentiments, but was satisfied with a friendly intercourse within certain forms, — denoted a thorough knowledge of his character. With Alexandrina he believed to be able to solve the great problem of being tied and free at the same time. And how much more brilliant was the life now opening before him! Beloved by Alexandrina, whose rank and station entitled her to the highest ambitions, whose beauty would bring the world to her feet and whose love did not insist upon controlling him!

She conversed with animation, with sparkling eyes — she looked radiantly happy. Henrick gazed tenderly into her beaming face. Her words fell upon his ear like the twittering of a bird.

The voice of the servant in the ante-room, who seemed to be answering a question,

startled them. Von Harden rose to his feet; he apprehended a visitor, whose coming might have the most embarrassing consequences, as far as Alexandrina was concerned. He was just going to give an order to the servant, that he was not at home for anybody, no matter whom — when the servant threw open the folding-doors and Clemence entered the room. With an involuntary movement Alexandrina, who blushed scarlet at this unexpected appearance, hid her face on Henrick's shoulder. Von Harden, standing between the two women, both of whom loved him, had to summon all his composure and ease of manners, to find a fitting word to say to Clemence. She silently returned his bow and turning to the young Countess, said calmly:

"Alexandrina, this foolish step of yours was not needed to compel your family to consent to a marriage, to which there is no objection raised, provided you love Baron von Harden and are loved by him — neither of which seems doubtful any longer," she added with a peculiar smile.

Alexandrina stood there with the air of a spoiled child. With a tone of haughty pride, leaning on Harden's arm, she asked:

"Who has sent you? Are grandmother and Nicolai angry with me?"

"For what? That you have acted like a school-girl? It is not so very long since you left the 'pension,' and some reminiscences of that period are pardonable, no doubt. It was very imprudent, however, for the world might hear of it. Baron von Harden will agree with me in this."

Alexandrina forestalled a reply, which might have been anything but an easy one to him.

"He has chided me severely for it, hence there is no necessity of others doing it again."

"Nor will it be done. I have simply to request you, to put on your furs and go down stairs. Princess Souwanoff awaits you in her carriage. Baron von Harden, you will have the goodness to offer your arm to the Countess Alexandrina. Meanwhile permit me to wait for you here. Princess Souwanoff is at this moment obliged to forego the pleasure of a longer interview with you, since she is on her way to the Grand-Duchess' palace. She counts however on the pleasure of seeing you at the family-table this evening. In the meantime she has desired me to make certain communications to you."

Harden replied in the same quiet and obliging tone, that he was entirely at her service, as soon as he had seen Alexandrina to the carriage. Alexandrina had soon re-

covered her equanimity. She laughed and jested with Clemence, assuring her, that she had appeared to her like the embodiment of her destiny, when she entered the room.

"How cold your hands are!" she said, turning to go. "I can feel it through my glove. Are you ill?"

Clemence shook her head. They went, and she remained alone for several minutes, during which she could lay aside the iron restraint she had imposed upon herself. What were her thoughts and feelings, when her eyes gazed at these rooms, which he inhabited, which she saw for the first and last time — who can tell? The part she had volunteered to act, she would perform to the end. That done, she was free, free as the bird in the air — she could then take life into her own hands and need give no account of it to anybody. She had repaid her debt of gratitude to the Princess, by removing all the difficulties herself. Her plans were clearly made. Any further meeting between her and von Harden would have been equally painful to both, to all. She was the stranger; it was for her to go, in order not to cloud the happiness of Alexandrina, who so far suspected nothing. The Princess and Nicolai would doubtless try to dissuade her, but the grand-daughter and sister was nearer to them, than she.

Her head was in a tumult of feverish confusion; she felt, that she should not be capable much longer of maintaining her outward calmness. She longed to fly away to where she might be alone with herself and her despair, where the pity of the curious could not follow her, who pretend to comfort and console, in order to see how deep the dagger is buried in the wound! She would bury herself in solitude and forget not only *him*, but all and everything! Ligouwka! That name and place suddenly occurred to her. There she might find what she sought. How still and dead must the steppe be in its snowy shroud! In that lonely, desolate house, within whose walls every footstep resounded, she would remain, until — yes, until . . . ! She dared not pursue the thought farther. Ligouwka! In the cold, barren steppe she would end her life. Poor Clemence!

Harden returned. He was pale and wrathful within. He felt unspeakably inferior to Clemence at that moment, and *that* he could never forgive her. How did she dare to take matters so apparently lightly, and even presume to shape his future life with so free a hand? For a few moments they stood face to face. He noticed, that her features had greatly changed, but that change touched no sympathetic, compas-

sionate chord in his heart. On the contrary, an expression of scorn flitted across his face: "Tragical once more," he said to himself. She seemed to catch that expression, for she also knew how to read his eyes.

"Let us clearly understand the situation of affairs," she began. "After what has happened, both Princess Souwanoff and Count Nicolai look upon a public engagement this very day, as the only possibility of saving Alexandrina's reputation from calumny and slander. I believe Princess Souwanoff has at once driven to the Taurian palace, in order to present her granddaughter to the Grand-Duchess as your *fiancée*."

"An extraordinary haste and precipitation," said Harden sarcastically.

"So it is. Can it astonish you? It is not for me to tell you, that this haste was prompted, less by the unbounded joy of welcoming you as a member of their family, than, as I already observed, by the desire of saving Alexandrina's honor."

"Princess Souwanoff evidently doubts not in the least, that I am perfectly agreed with this arrangement."

"Not in the least. Besides, it would matter little whether you were or not. This time you will *have* to be satisfied."

"Clemence!" he spoke up sharply with a menacing look.

"I beg you to remember," she said coldly, "that I am in your room, and that, as a gentleman, it behoves you more than ever, to treat me with becoming courtesy."

"You know at any rate, how to make this obligation a most unwelcome one. You have the advantage, inasmuch as you are revenging yourself."

"By no means! Your fine words are totally superfluous. I am merely doing Princess Souwanoff's bidding. You love Alexandrina"—she had to stop a moment, the conversation was becoming too much for her.

"Yes," he replied after a brief silence, "I love her, but—"

"But you do not intend to marry her, because you dread wedlock? Alexandrina has estimated you correctly, and therefore she took this step, which compels both yourself, and her family alike to accept, what must be. Even though it might cost you a severe struggle, you would still be obliged to become the husband of Countess Kuriakin, and methinks, you are not to be much piqued on *that* account."

"What, if I did not allow myself to be forced into it? Does the Princess think that she is doing me an honor, by giving me her granddaughter? My name has as

good a sound as her own,—there is certainly no necessity of making it appear a tremendous sacrifice."

"That it is a sacrifice, I cannot deny. Aside from all other considerations, you are a foreigner and do not belong to their church. Nevertheless, for the sake of the world, the sacrifice is made willingly and with apparent rejoicing. Princess Souwanoff expects you this afternoon, in order to receive your offer in due form. Long engagements are not customary here. The wedding is to take place in three or four weeks at farthest. All the other details you will be good enough to arrange with your *fiancée* and her relations."

"And what is the alternative left me, if I should refuse to be thus disposed of? Since you are the negotiating party in this matter, you will be pleased to inform me on that point."

"If you should refuse?" Her passion was by this time fully aroused. "What would be the consequences of such a refusal, I can easily tell you. Count Kuriakin would assuredly know how to guard his sister's honor. In case you should decline a duel—I know you dislike the idea of lightly exposing your life—he would insult you in a way, which would render your stay here impossible. You would be *obliged* to fight, and I can assure you, that one or the other would have to pay the insult with his blood. Should you, on the other hand, prefer to avoid the Count by a sudden departure, you would commit a great imprudence. He would know where to find you, and your position, not only here, but in the aristocratic world everywhere, would greatly suffer by so cautious a retreat. That you acted dishonorably towards Clemence d'Orville, the defenceless girl, will be forgiven you; but an insult to Countess Alexandrina Kuriakin will close the doors of the aristocracy to you forever."

"Enough," von Harden coldly replied. "I have never concealed from you, that a love such as yours has something troublesome and alarming in it for me. You are reproaching me, and I admit not without cause. I ought to have acted with less reserve and consideration. Still I expected from your own delicacy, your prudence, that you would see the difference between your sentiments and mine. You force me to tell you, that, as once before, you are again mistaken, if you think, that your love is either a boon or a necessity to me. Neither yours, nor that of any other woman can ever fill my life exclusively. Had you quietly shared the cordial friendly feelings which I cherished for you—we should not

have met thus. The restless tumult of your affection, the unreasonable, frenzied desire to control the whole of my individuality, chilled me. I feel bound to confess to you for the sake of my own justification, that, even if I had not met Alexandrina, a marriage with you would have made me utterly wretched. Our characters have too many points of resemblance, not to repel one the other in a closer contact."

She heard every one of these cold, harsh words! They remained stamped on her memory, never to be thence effaced again. For the second time he had told her that he had never loved her, that he had deceived her and been himself deceived. A feeling of hatred rose in her heart. She was nothing more to him! She would remain an undying reproach, an everlasting sting to his heart at least! He should forever carry with him the consciousness of having destroyed her life and happiness. She did not stop to think, that he had uttered those words in anger and excitement, that she herself, by her scornful tone, had driven him to the utmost. She did not stop to think, that the retribution for past wrongs had come at last, which she assuredly had not atoned for by a life of affection, admiration and splendor. She did not think of all this! It required long years of misery and solitude, to make her see herself clearly and to recognize the truth of what he had told her at parting, namely, that she had loved him with a selfish love!

She arose.

"May Princess Souwanoff expect you in an hour from now?"

He bowed his assent.

"Clemence," he said in a softer tone, when she turned to go, "pardon me, if I have hurt your feelings. It is better so for both of us. The time will yet come, when you will thank me for this. I am not constituted to make others happy."

"You have not hurt my feelings," she replied with careless indifference. "Do not trouble yourself," she said with a declining gesture, as he moved to escort her down-stairs. "I can find my way alone."

But she had to cling to the balusters for support on descending the staircase.

For many, many years Henrick remembered the tone, in which she had said: "I can find my way alone!" It had cut him to the quick, and if he could have made the past undone, verily, he would have sacrificed much for her. But it was too late; they were being impelled by the force of circumstances.

The new engagement was the great topic of conversation at parties and clubs. Peo-

ple thought they saw a connection between it and the duel between Count Kuriakin and Count S—, the latter of whom had been severely but not dangerously wounded; nobody however knew exactly what had happened. That Princess Souwanoff's well-known genial face looked less cheerful, might be easily accounted for. Countess Kuriakin might certainly have made a more brilliant "*parti*," although it could not be denied, that Baron von Harden, beside his fame as an artist, had also thrown a good old name and a large fortune into the scale. There was however but little occasion to speak about the new couple. Baron von Harden made the best possible use of the short time left them (after the wedding they intended to start for Paris at once) by making a trip to Moscow; for to have been in Russia twice, without seeing Moscow, would have been altogether unpardonable.

Mdlle. d'Orville had suddenly left, to the astonishment and regret of the friends of the house, who missed the young girl very much. Any questions about her, Princess Souwanoff met with the sorrowful assurance, that her father's sister, who had been almost a second mother to Clemence, had fallen dangerously ill, and desired to have her niece come and live with her. That sounded credible, and nobody dreamed of there being the slightest connection between Clemence's sudden departure and Countess Alexandrina's engagement. Count Nicolai could not be present at his sister's wedding, an order of the Emperor having sent the young officer with important dispatches to the Caucasus. This was generally believed to be a slight punishment for the duel, which had given rise to several explanatory letters between the * * * Embassy and the Imperial Government. Princess Souwanoff's dejected appearance seemed natural! She had so soon again lost the grand-daughter, who had but just returned to her!

Very few of the more intimate friends, to whom belonged the Secretary of the French legation, had the least idea that a drama had been enacted in the bosom of that family, of which scarcely a sound had reached the outer world. The fine diplomat had his special reasons for such a supposition, which reasons he, however, quietly kept to himself, because he greatly esteemed the parties most interested. It had struck him strangely, that the Grand-Duchess at the wedding, which took place with great pomp at the private chapel in the Souwanoff palace, had congratulated the Baron with visible coldness; a coldness, which singularly contrasted with the cordial relations hitherto existing between the artist and the

Grand-Ducal pair. There must be some secret, but positive reason for this sudden change. He thought he was on the point of discovering it, when he overheard the Grand-Duchess asking Princess Souwanoff in a whisper:

"Is there any news from Clemence?"

"Very sad news, your Imperial Highness; she is seriously ill, and I fear—"

He could not hear the rest.

Baron von Harden left for France on the day after the wedding. The Princess wept, when she pressed Alexandrina a last time to her heart; but the young bride looked so beaming—she could safely let her depart. When von Harden kissed her hand, she whispered to him:

"Make amends to the child for the wrong you have done to another."

He straightened himself proudly.

"Be assured, Princess Souwanoff, that Alexandrina shall never rue her choice."

He was impatient to leave Petersburg, where his stay had been so sadly embittered to him. Even Alexandrina herself did not succeed in dispelling the painful consciousness he was writhing under, of having been received unwillingly into her family. He breathed more freely, when he stepped into the travelling coach and his disagreeable reminiscences vanished only, when they had left the Russian frontier behind them.

Was he happy? He was, because he had no time given him to destroy his happiness. It was of but short duration. Alexandrina kept her promise; she became the joy and sunlight of his home. When he felt gloomy and out of humor, she left him quietly to his own thoughts, and smilingly received the homages paid her everywhere by every body, until he returned to her of his own accord.

The beautiful woman gave lustre and brilliancy to his parties. Wherever they were, in London, Paris or Florence, the élite of the society deemed it an honor to be received by them. He, the great artist—she, the elegant, beautiful lady of high and noble birth; both equally affable and *spirituels*—how could it be otherwise than that they should be admired and fêted wherever they went?

They resided now here, now there; making the round of nearly all the larger capitals on the Continent, except Petersburg. Von Harden could not overcome his animosity towards the Princess and Nicolai, and his influence over Alexandrina was sufficiently great to make her forget even her nearest relations.

Both Princess Souwanoff and Count Ni-

colai felt this neglect deeply; both blamed von Harden for it. They had long forgiven Alexandrina, she had acted lightly, not wrongly; they could not upbraid her for what had broken Clemence's heart.

Henrick was happy, happier than he had ever supposed he could be, when he held in his arms a helpless little creature, brought to him for the first time. This happiness he vowed to cherish and guard tenderly! He experienced an emotion of heart-felt compassion on looking into the face of the sleeping child. He loved Alexandrina with a deeper love for that precious gift. That great happiness of his was to be destroyed! After a union of scarcely three years, she died after a short illness, without pain, almost with a smile on her lips, in the very hey-day of life. It was after a ball, to which she had ventured too soon; a few days of suffering ensued, and the beautiful blooming woman was no more! The little child, but a few months old, soon followed her.

Nobody realized von Harden's intense sufferings. Outwardly he was the same as of old, save that his sarcasms were sharper and more cutting, his temper more easily ruffled. His features were more deeply marked, his hair strongly sprinkled with grey. That was all, which denoted a deeper and more heart-felt grief.

In his darkest hours, thoughts of Clemence would come to him. He knew of her solitary life, her burying herself alive. He could not come to her relief, it was too late; they must both try to make of life what they could.

When he received Princess Souwanoff's letter, informing him of Clemence's death, and mentioning her last words of forgiveness, he was profoundly touched and he realized for the first time, that he had heedlessly flung away a precious love.

"Poor Clemence!" he muttered to himself. "She knew everything better than I—better how to live and better how to die."

He did not go back to Germany. In winter he may be seen at Paris, in summer in Italy. He has retired from public life, but still clings to his art. What he writes is still full of genius; but all his writings express a restless longing, an incessant impetuosity, which, however, lack the touch of clearness and sound purpose.

His friends—and he has but few of them—say, that his is a nature, which lacks the faculty of being happy. They may be right!

(O. C—z.)

From *The Belgavia*.
DOES THE EARTH GROW SICK?

It is a curious and startling reflection, how slowly the population of our globe increases. Mr. Babbage or other "great arithmetician" might show that, if the human species, during the last two or three thousand years, had increased at the rate now prevalent, or even at the ordinary rate prevalent in the earliest periods of civilization, when the sanitary conditions of life were far inferior to those of present times, mankind would ere this have been as numerous as the sands on the sea-shore — they would now cover the earth as the waters do the bed of the sea. Unquestionably the greatest cause of this slow increase in the world's population which we witness is War with its slaughter and desolation, and Conquest with its depressing effects upon the national life of the vanquished; and as subsidiary causes of this kind may be mentioned changes in the highways of commerce and in the social and moral habits of the people. A brilliant and striking chapter on this subject may be, and ere long doubtless will be, written by some great philosophic historian. In the present paper we put aside this high theme, and desire simply to call attention to some matters connected with a different branch of the same subject — namely, the great Epidemics which from time to time arise to obstruct the normal increase of the world's inhabitants, and indeed of the whole amount of Life on the surface of our planet.

At recurrent periods, terrible maladies of various kinds, but of such fearful intensity compared with ordinary diseases that they are classed by themselves under the generic name of Plagues, sweep over the surface of the earth, carrying off myriads or millions of its human inhabitants. Such visitations are, if not less frequent, at least on the whole less desolating at present than in earlier times — thanks, doubtless, to the more favourable conditions of life now prevalent. Nevertheless the Plagues of past times have still their representative in the terrible epidemic of Cholera, which is really of itself as mortal a malady as the Black Death, or any other form of the Plague with which mankind have ever had to contend.

But there are other Epidemics which at times afflict the earth, and obstruct the increase of population, although they do not directly affect Man himself. We do not speak of great Famines, such as those of the East, produced by drought, — although many of them are as destructive to mankind, in the regions where they occur, as the direst Plagues. We speak only of specific

types of actual disease, affecting the lower animals — the beasts of the field, the fishes of the sea and rivers, and the birds of the air, — and also the vegetable world. Murders — plagues which affect the herds and flocks and the lower animals in general — have been known since the earliest times of history, and a terrible instance of their widespread severity upon the lower creation is given in the record of the great Plagues which befell Egypt in the time of Moses. As regards the mysterious diseases which at times afflict the vegetable world, we have had several instances quite recently in our own and adjoining countries, — such as the inexplicable "potato-rot" in our own Islands, the vine-disease on the Continent, and other minor forms of the same malady of vegetation. In addition to these, and obviously of the same type, is the very frequent plague commonly called "blight" or "mildew," which so often destroys the hopes of the agriculturist, yet which he is as helpless to prevent as science is impotent to explain.

Here, then, we have a series of maladies affecting alike man, the animal creation, and the vegetable world — in short, all the various forms of Life on the surface of our globe. And in not a few instances (notably in the case of the Plagues of Egypt) all these maladies, in greater or less degree, occur simultaneously, as if the very Earth itself grew sick. In fact, if disease simultaneously affects all forms of Life which our planet develops, what other deduction can we draw than that it is the Earth itself which temporarily sickens?

The idea that great Plagues, such as affect wide regions of the earth, are due to causes extrinsic to human life, and are attributable to changes in the condition of the earth itself, is not a new one. Mr. Parkin, in his treatise on *The Remote Cause of Epidemics* (the first part published in 1841, and the second part in 1853), attributes the originating cause of great Plagues to what he terms "volcanic action." In justice to his treatise, however, it should be said that "volcanic action" is a very imperfect description of the influence to which he attributes Plagues; what he really means is, that great pestilences are due not simply to volcanic action (for in this sense his theory would be quite untenable), but to telluric influences similar in their nature to those which produce volcanic action. Even with this enlargement of his meaning, we cannot wholly agree with him; we still regard his proposition as an imperfect statement of the truth, — as we shall show in the sequel. But, in the first place, let us exhibit his the-

ory to the best advantage, by stating the facts relating to two of the most terrible pestilences which have afflicted mankind — namely, the Black Death of the Middle Ages, and the Cholera. Apart from its theoretic bearing, the narrative of those fearful plagues possesses an interest of its own; and we may premise that in his statement of facts, Mr Parkin takes the German work of Hecker for his guide.

The plague called the Black Death occurred in the fourteenth century and it swept across both Asia and Europe, from the Pacific to the Atlantic — pursuing its devastating course for fully seventeen years. It made its first appearance in China, in 1333, and it ravaged that country for several years in succession. Its outbreak was accompanied and followed by striking abnormal phenomena alike of a terrestrial and atmospheric kind:

TERRESTRIAL PHENOMENA IN CHINA.

"Simultaneously with the outbreak of the malady, commenced a series of terrestrial commotions, almost unexampled in the history of such phenomena; for we find that, a few months after the severe visitation just referred to, an earthquake occurred at and near Kingsai; and so severe was the concussion, that the mountains of Kiating-ghan fell in, and a lake was formed of more than a hundred leagues in circumference, where thousands were told found their grave. These concussions continued to return in China, at short intervals, for many years; as we have it recorded that an earthquake, which continued ten days, occurred in Kingsai in 1338, and again in 1339, when the mountain Hontchang was swallowed up. From this time they became more and more frequent, until the year 1346, when they subsided altogether, or did not prevail to the same extent, for we have no further accounts of similar catastrophes."

ATMOSPHERIC PHENOMENA.

"Simultaneously with the outbreak of the malady, a parching drought prevailed in the tract of country watered by the rivers Keang and Hoai. This was followed by such violent torrents of rain in and about Kingsai, at that time the capital of the empire, that, according to tradition, more than 400,000 people perished in the floods. In the succeeding year, an unexampled drought was felt in Tehe; and in Koukouang and Ho-man a drought prevailed, accompanied by innumerable swarms of locusts, while famine and pestilence, as usual, followed in their train. From this time there was a constant succession of rain and floods in China; and in the year 1338, after three months' rain in Pien-teheou and Leang-teheou there followed unheard-of inundations which destroyed seven cities. Violent rains, with floods and inundations, continued to recur, and to devastate various districts until 1347; when, as we are in-

formed, the fury of the elements subsided in China — being, it may be observed, about the same time as the cessation of the terrestrial concussions."

Such were the abnormal terrestrial and atmospheric phenomena which accompanied the outbreak and duration of the Black Death in China. When it had run its course in that country, this terrible plague spread eastward across Asia, both north and south of the mountain-girdle of the Himalayas, — strewing Tartary with corpses, depopulating India, and thereafter ravaging Persia, Mesopotamia, and Syria. Originating on the coast of the Pacific in 1333, in thirteen years it traversed the whole continent of Asia to the shores of the Caspian and Black Seas. In 1347 it made its appearance at Constantinople in undiminished malignity; and starting from that point, in the next four years it made the tour of Europe. From Constantinople it spread through the southern portion of our continent, reaching the south of France and the Iberian peninsula in the beginning of 1348. It thence passed northward through France into the British Isles, Norway, Sweden, Poland, and Russia, completing the circuit of Europe in 1351.

Let us now see the abnormal phenomena which attended its course in Europe, — again classing these phenomena, as narrated by Mr. Parkin, under two heads:

TERRESTRIAL PHENOMENA IN EUROPE.

"We find it recorded that, soon after the plague had broken out in the island of Cyprus, an earthquake, accompanied by a frightful hurricane, shook the foundations of the island. The sea overflowed, the ships were dashed to pieces on the rocks; and few outlived the terrific event, whereby, according to the writers of that period, this fertile and blooming island was converted into a desert.

Pursuing the course of these grand revolutions further, to quote the language of Dr. Hecker, we find notice of an unexampled earthquake, which, on the 25th January 1348, shook Greece, Italy, and the neighbouring countries; Naples, Rome, Pisa, Bologna, Padua, Venice, and many other cities suffered very severely; while many whole villages in the surrounding districts were swallowed up: castles, houses, and churches were overthrown, and thousands of persons buried in their ruins.

In Carinthia more than thirty villages, together with all the churches, were demolished, and more than a thousand corpses were drawn out of the rubbish; while the city of Villach was so completely destroyed, that a few only of its numerous inhabitants escaped. Not only were cities destroyed, or left in ruins, and whole villages swallowed up, but it was also found, that when the earth ceased to tremble, mountains

even, according to the testimony of writers of that period had been removed from their position.

Recurring to the events of the same kind, which were observed in the other countries of Europe visited by the disease, we shall find that destructive earthquakes occurred in France, England, Denmark, Sweden, Poland, Silesia, and much further north; for, in consequence of the violent concussions, towering icebergs formed, we are told, on the coast of East Greenland, so that no one since that period has been able to penetrate beyond that shore. Mezeray, speaking of these phenomena, says, 'A universal concussion of the earth, both in France and the countries to the north, overturned whole towns, rooted up trees and mountains, and filled the plains with chasms so profound, that it appeared as if hell was about to swallow up the whole human race.' These destructive earthquakes continued to recur throughout France, England, Germany, and the northern countries, as well as Italy, until the year 1360, which was beyond the period that has been designated as belonging to the great mortality; for the time when the Black Death raged with destructive violence in Europe was, with the exception of Russia, from the year 1347 to 1350. The disease, it is true, continued to recur at different periods up to the seventeenth century; but these eruptions were neither so severe nor so general as the former, and partook more of the nature of endemic than epidemic complaints."

ATMOSPHERIC PHENOMENA.

"The writers of that period dwell principally on the rains, floods, and inundations, which were experienced; not only because these phenomena attract more attention at the time from their nature and character, but also because they are productive of great and irreparable injury to the earth and its inhabitants. I should conclude, however, that these rains and floods were preceded by great droughts and dry seasons; not only because we have seen that such was actually the case in China at this period, but also because that one historian of this period states there was an abundance of provisions in the granaries at the commencement of the plague. The first particulars, however, of which we have any precise account, are the floods, which occurred in the vicinity of the Rhine and in France in 1338, and which could not be attributed, says Dr. Hecker, to rain alone; for everywhere, even on the tops of mountains, springs were seen to burst forth, and dry tracts were laid under water in an inexplicable manner.

The order of the seasons also, continues this writer, seemed to be inverted; rains, floods, and failures in the crops were so general, that few places were exempt from them. The consequence of failure in the crops was soon felt, especially in Italy and the surrounding countries, where, in one particular year, a rain, which continued for five months, had destroyed the seed. In the latter cities they were compelled in the spring of 1347 to have recourse to a dis-

tribution of bread among the poor, particularly at Florence; where they erected large bake-houses, from which 94,000 loaves of bread, of twelve ounces each, were dispensed daily. The same inversion of the seasons and the same returns of the disease, were felt more or less in all the countries of Europe, although not to the same extent; so that, as one writer expresses himself, 'children died of want in their mothers' arms; and want, misery, and despair were general throughout Christendom.'

Many other atmospheric phenomena were also observed during the epidemic period, for great and extraordinary meteors appeared in many places, and were regarded with superstitious horror. A pillar of fire, which, on the 20th December 1348, remained for an hour at sunrise over the Pope's palace in Avignon; a fireball, which, in the same year, was seen at sunset over Paris, and was distinguished from similar phenomena by its longer duration, are also recorded in the chronicles of the age."

Such were the striking phenomena which accompanied the visitation of the fearful pestilence of the Black Death. Its course throughout Asia and Europe was attended by a series of earthquakes, by abnormal seasons, and by meteoric disturbances, plainly indicating an abnormal condition in the earth itself.

As the most terrible pestilence of modern times, let us next take the Cholera; and, examining its visitation in like fashion, let us see if the physical concomitants of its origin and progress correspond in any way with those of the above-described pestilence of the Middle Ages. Like the Black Death, the Cholera originated in eastern Asia, but, unlike its mediæval predecessors, it appears to have been confined to the countries south of the Himalayas and Hindoo-koosh, and only broke northward in the vicinity of the Caspian Sea, where the latitudinal mountain-girdle almost disappears. Its first outbreak took place in Bengal, in August 1817, and its ravages in the Indian peninsula continued for a year. From India the Cholera spread westward along the shores of the Persian Gulf, and up the valley of the Euphrates, — at which point its course bifurcated, westward through Syria, and northward through Persia. In its westward line of advance the Cholera stopped short on the Syrian coast of the Levant; so that southern Europe and the islands of the Mediterranean were not reached for several years afterwards, and then by a wholly different route. In its northward line of advance, through Persia, the pestilence proceeded very slowly; and it halted for some time in the region between the Caspian and Black Seas. It was from this point that the

Black Death entered Europe, and it was from this point also that the Cholera invaded our continent. But the former of these plagues took a southerly course,—entering Europe at Constantinople and spreading south-westwards along the shores of the Mediterranean; whereas the Cholera passed northwards by Astrakhan into Russia, thence westward to the shores of the Atlantic; thereafter, turning, it completed its circuit of Europe by passing eastward through Spain, Italy, Greece, and the Mediterranean islands. A singular parallelism in the career of those two great epidemics is presented in the rate at which they travelled, as well as in their course from east to west. Breaking out in China, the Black Death reached the frontiers of Europe at Constantinople in fourteen years; breaking out in eastern India, the Cholera reached the borders of Europe at Astrakhan in twelve years, and another year elapsed before it overpassed the Asiatic frontier and entered our continent. Moreover, although the one epidemic entered by a southern and the other by a northern route, they both completed the circuit of Europe in the same time—four years.

The physical phenomena which attended the outbreak and career of the Cholera in India are thus stated by Mr. Parkin:

TERRESTRIAL PHENOMENA.

“This modern scourge of the human race commenced its ravages in the province of Bengal, in August 1817. In October several shocks of an earthquake were felt in Ganjam and Berhampore; on the 16th of the same month five shocks were felt in the course of a few minutes at Benares, and about the same time at Cawnpore, and in the camp of the central division of the Bengal army.

No particular convulsion appears to have been experienced again until 1819, when an earthquake—a phenomenon, to use the words of a writer in the *Madras Courier*, very unusual, we might, we believe, almost say unprecedented in this part of India—occurred on the 16th of June in various parts of the peninsula; but more particularly in Cutch, which appears to have been the centre of the shock. So little known is such a visitation, observes the above authority, that the moonisif quoted his Hindoo shasters as foretelling that an earthquake would some time happen. The effects of the shock in Bhoj are thus described by the above writer: ‘After two slight motions that lifted the chairs, the tower near which Captain Macmurdo was sitting, after heaving and rolling in a most awful degree, gave way at the bottom, and crumbling down buried guns and carriages in the rubbish; a moment after, the towers and curtains of the fort-wall and upwards of fifteen thousand houses were reduced to ruins. This

shock lasted about two minutes, but many slight concussions were also experienced during the night. On the next day the earth was frequently in motion, until about a quarter to ten, when a severe shock, which lasted nearly fifty seconds, was experienced, and brought down a number of shattered buildings. Until the beginning of August [1819] no day passed without some slight shocks; subsequently they became less frequent, only occurring at uncertain periods of many days’ interval, until the 23d of November, which appears to have been the last distinct one.’”

ATMOSPHERIC PHENOMENA.

“Atmospherical vicissitudes commenced in India in 1816 [fully a year before the outbreak of the pestilence]; a year marked by the absence of the accustomed rains and the prevalence of great heats, and consequent drought; so that the spring crop of grain was entirely destroyed. In the western parts of the province of Bengal the drought was so uncommon as to dry up the rivers. In the upper provinces, says Mr. Jameson, the extraordinary scantiness of the rains was yet more remarkable. From Benares upwards, Oude, the districts within the Doab, and those west of the Jumna, were dried-up by the long-continued and unceasing heats. In September this unwonted drought gave way, and was succeeded by heavy and incessant rains for many days, so that the whole face of the country was laid under water. The ensuing cold season, also, both in the lower and upper provinces was raw, damp, and unpleasant, and throughout cloudy, with frequent falls of rain. February [1817], says the writer just referred to, had more the appearance of an autumnal than of a cold-weather month.”

The year 1817 (being that in which the Cholera commenced)

“was characterized by a very close sultry summer and autumn, and an excessively rainy season. The weather should now, according to the common course of things, adds the writer of the report, have become cool, settled, and fair; but the continuance of unwonted humidity and warmth in the air, and the frequent occurrence of rain throughout the month (November), proved that the remainder of the year was to proceed with the same strange unseasonableness and insubtrity as that which marked the early part of its course. The following year (viz. 1818) was remarkable for the like irregularities in the seasons. The hot weather set in about the 20th of February, being earlier than usual; instead of continuing, however, until the beginning of June, as is commonly the case, heavy rains were experienced about the end of February. This sudden change, says Mr. Jameson, is worthy of particular notice; because it was at this very time that the epidemic, after dying away in November and December, and being nearly exhausted during January, took head; and amongst the natives, raged with indiscrim-

inate violence until the end of the following July [1818.]”

The progress of the Cholera in Persia, to which country it next passed along the shores of the Indian Ocean, is thus described by Mr. Parkin:

“The epidemic commenced at Bender Abassi in July 1821, and, after attacking Shiraz, gradually extended itself in a northerly direction through the heart of the country. It was not, however, until the middle of 1823 that it reached the towns situated in the north of Persia and on the southern borders of the Caspian Sea.

Referring to the phenomena which now engage our attention, we learn that, after some slight shocks had been felt at Bombay, and the neighbouring districts, in 1821, a concussion was experienced at Khooskezend on the 11th June 1824; but the shock was not very severe, for the accounts merely say that the walls of the houses were cracked and the mountains covered with dust. Again, by a letter from an eyewitness, dated Jehel Murmal, near Shiraz, we find that, on the morning of the 25th of June, the inhabitants were disturbed by the shock of an earthquake of much greater force than the preceding. The shock must have been a very severe one, for an Armenian clergyman, writing to a friend at Calcutta, states that Kazeroon, Feruzabad, and the surrounding villages, suffered the same calamity, while the number of persons destroyed in Shiraz alone was reckoned at about two hundred. Slight shocks continued to be felt at various intervals until the following year, when another severe concussion, equal almost to the preceding one, was experienced at Shiraz.”

Of the phenomena which attended the Cholera in its other line of advance — namely, westward into Syria — we read as follows:

“On the 13th August 1822 (as we are informed by Mr. Barker, the British Consul, in a communication to the Levant Company), Aleppo, Antioch, every village and every cottage in the Pashalic, and some towns in the adjoining ones, were, in ten or twelve minutes, entirely ruined by an earthquake, and had become a heap of stones and rubbish; while, on the lowest computation, twenty thousand human beings, about a tenth part of the population, were destroyed, and an equal number maimed or wounded. Slight shocks continued to be felt in the same spot, until the 9th October, when they entirely ceased.”

Finally, of the abnormal atmospheric phenomena which attended the visit of the Cholera in Europe, Dr. Foster thus writes:

“I consider what I call the epidemic period as having begun as early as September 1828, when that extraordinary *lumen zodiacale* was seen to stretch across the heavens. I have also traced a succession of atmospheric changes since

that period, so that the spring of 1825 became remarkably unhealthy; while the mortality in some countries was prodigious, and the cold of the summer in some parts of Europe as extraordinary. The winter of 1829-30 which followed was one of unusual severity all over the world; even in the south of Spain and in Africa snow lay on the ground, and in most parts of Europe covered it, from November 1829 to the end of February 1830. The cholera did not arrive in Russia until the following spring, but the plague broke out at Jassy, and in Moldavia severe illness prevailed.”

Such were the grander terrestrial and atmospheric disturbances which accompanied two of the most deadly and wide-spreading plagues which have occurred in times fully within the ken of history. All atmospheric phenomena of an important character do not originate in the atmosphere itself, but are due to electrical and other changes in the solid earth; the gaseous envelope of air responding sympathetically to the varying conditions of the solid globe which it surrounds. And from the above-mentioned facts, as well as from many others which might be appealed to, it seems indubitable that the grander pestilences which afflict mankind do not originate in man himself — they do not owe their origin to any neglect of sanitary conditions, however much these may aggravate them, but to abnormal conditions of the Earth itself. This fact of (what may be called) the extrinsic origin of some epidemics is clearly shown by a hundred instances in the history of the Cholera — *inter alia*, ships at sea, far removed from the possibility of contagion, have been struck in a moment by the deadly breath of the plague (sometimes visible as a lurid cloud), while other ships, similarly circumstanced in all respects save their local position, have escaped free, because lying out of the (sometimes very narrow) line of the plague-wind. Thus it may be said, in regard to most of the great plagues, that not merely figuratively but actually, they are caused by a sickening of the Earth. The Earth at times sickens, and its inhabitants sicken with it.

The general features of these abnormal conditions of the Earth — the symptoms of its sickening — are usually these: the occurrence of earthquakes and very hot seasons, followed by a deluge of rain in the winter months. A dearth of food sometimes accompanies them — in Eastern countries caused by the heat and drought which usually precede their outbreak, and in Europe (where heat is always favourable to the grain crops) by the incessant rains and floods which follow the initiatory period of

drought. We have seen that this was the case in China soon after the outbreak of the Black Death, and also that a partial dearth occurred in India at the first appearance of the Cholera; and in regard to our continent, during the visitation of the Black Death, it is stated that "although there was abundance in the granaries at the commencement of the Plague (owing to the preceding hot season), failures in the crops became so general subsequently, that children died of want in their mothers' arms."

The connection between epidemics and an abnormal condition of the earth was perceived long ago by Shakespeare, apparently as the result of his own observation. In *Midsummer-Night's Dream* he thus describes some remarkable seasons which occurred in his day, at the same time indicating his sense of their mysterious character by ascribing them, in the play, to the wrath of Oberon:

"Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea
Contagious fogs; which, falling on the land,
Have every pelted river made so proud
That they have overborne their continents.
The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in
vain,

The ploughman lost his sweat, and the green
corn

Hath rotted ere his youth attain'd a beard,
The fold stands empty in the drowned field,
And crows are fatted with the murrain flock.
The nine men's morris is fill'd up with mud,
And the quaint mazes in the wanton green,
For lack of tread, are undistinguishable.
The human mortals want their winter here.

... The moon, the governess of floods,
Pale in her anger washes all the air,
That rheumatic diseases do abound;
And thorough this distemperature we see
The seasons alter. Hoary-headed frosts
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose;
And on old Hiems' chin and icy crown
An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds
Is, as in mockery, set. The spring, the summer,

The chiding autumn, angry winter, change
Their wonted liveries; and the 'mazed world,
By their increase, now knows not which is
which."

Our readers can hardly fail to note how closely the abnormal seasons and terrestrial convulsions during the eighteen months ending with March last correspond to those which preceded or accompanied the great epidemic of which we have spoken—and especially the terrible pestilence of the Black Death. During those eighteen months, earthquakes and volcanic action were rife to a degree unparalleled in the present century, or indeed for a much longer period; and a corresponding disturbance

occurred in the character of the seasons—the tropically hot and dry summer of last year (so favourable to our wheat crops) having been succeeded by a warm winter—season of rains and inundations. This parallelism suffices to prove that the data in connection with the origin of epidemics, and also of the succession of good and bad seasons, are far too imperfect, at present, to allow of any confident surmises as to the character of the ensuing year either as regards health or the harvest. In truth, earthquakes (which we regard simply as thunderstorms in the earth) probably differ much as regards the character of the electric force which produces them: in some cases, the normal electrical condition of the earth is simply increased, in others the *kind* of electricity is altered—and probably it is only in the latter cases that the morbid influence is produced which generates plague and pestilence. For example, looking over a long catalogue of earthquakes, I find that the fourteenth century, in the middle of which the Black Death appeared, was by no means a notable century for earthquakes—several other centuries, in which no great plague occurred, were marked by a far greater frequency of such terrestrial disturbances. Hence, although a connection of some kind between earthquakes and pestilence and abnormal seasons appears to be established, our knowledge of the subject is at present far too imperfect and fragmentary to enable us to give a correct explanation of the connection.

But let us continue our exposition. The atmospheric phenomena which generally precede earthquakes and great hurricanes—which disturbances are identical in their nature, although the one affects the solid earth and the other the supernatant atmosphere—are similar to those which frequently herald the approach of the Plague. Earthquakes are generally preceded by an unusual and sultry stillness of the air, and sometimes by the appearance of a dark cloud, due to the disturbed electricity of the earth communicating itself to the atmosphere. An unusual calm, in like manner, often precedes the outbreak of great hurricanes, the cyclones and typhoons of the tropics—electrical storms in the atmosphere, which are the aerial parallels of earthquakes. Indeed, the "little cloud no bigger than a man's hand" has been a noted prelude of hurricanes for three thousand years. In the Barbadoes hurricane of 1831, Mr. Simons, of St. Vincent, observed, before the storm reached that island, a cloud of olive-green colour to the north of him, so threatening in its aspect, that he had never seen anything so alarming

during a residence of forty years in the tropics. Dense, low, unmoving clouds are another form which the abnormal state of the atmosphere assumes before earthquakes—as witnessed at Naples in 1730, and on other occasions. The outbreak of great pestilences is frequently preceded by similar signs in the air. The Plague which befell Egypt in the time of Moses was attended by a great darkness; so were the plagues which visited Rome A. D. 252 and 746; and so also, in the plague in the year B. C. 296, there was a remarkable darkness, under cover of which the Samnites made an attack upon the Roman lines. The same phenomenon occurred during the prevalence of the Black Death—"a dense and awful fog," says one writer, "was seen in the heavens, rising in the east" (from which direction the plague came), "and descending upon Italy." Similar signs in the air preceded the arrival of the Cholera. The appearance of a fixed cloud, says Mr. Jamieson, was remarked at Calcutta; and, wherever observed, it clearly indicated to the experienced eye the return of the Cholera. At Cairo also—as reported by the apothecary-in-chief of the hospital there—the sky on the approach of the Cholera, and for some days before its actual outbreak, produced a feeling of horror in the spectators, from the peculiar appearance of the sun—the rays of light being obscured, although there was not a cloud. Again, immediately before the arrival of the Cholera at Dantzic (27th May), there was a very unusual dense mist, so that the air became dark long before the sun had set. The same phenomenon occurred when the pestilence broke out in Rheinfeldt and some other places. We also remember to have read that an unusual darkness prevailed at Newcastle, during the last and most terrible visitation of the Cholera to that town some fourteen years ago.

These appalling clouds or fogs, which frequently herald the coming of the plague, although most noted for the darkness which they produce, sometimes give sensible indication of their morbid influence. In the year 252, when five thousand persons died daily at Rome, Eusebius states that the air was so corrupt as to form on objects a mould resembling the "turbid dew on dead bodies." Impressions of curious figures on doors, garments, and other articles were noticed during the plagues of 542 and 600; and of like nature were the *cruciculae*, which were beheld with superstitious horror in the pestilence of 746. A "stinking mist" was noticed during the visitation of the Black Death;—the fatal Angina

maligna among cattle, in 1662, was attended by a blue mist or dew on the herbage and pastures; and the Cholera mist at Dantzic, in the present century, had a disagreeable smell and taste; so that those who were exposed to it were forced to wash their mouths with water.

In the case of these fetid mists and depositions of mould, the air evidently contains deleterious matter—either from its own disorganization or decomposition, or from noxious exhalations which are given forth from the earth. It is well known that noxious exhalations occasionally take place during earthquakes. Seneca states that a vapour, caused by an earthquake in Calabria, destroyed six thousand sheep. During the eruption in Italy, in 1329, every species of animals, including the birds of the air, perished in great numbers. In like manner the earthquake in Jamaica in 1690 produced a general sickness; so that three thousand persons, of those who had survived the earthquake, perished by the subsequent pestilence. Among other well-recorded instances of this escape, or belching forth, of vapours from the earth during earthquakes, it is stated that at Oporto, during the earthquake of 1755, the river opened and seemed to discharge an immense quantity of air—manifestly gases which burst forth from the earth by momentary crevices in the bed of the river. Previous to the earthquake in Calabria in 1698, the sea wore a very unusual appearance: those who have seen a lake during a violent shower of rain, says Father Kircher, may have an idea of this agitation of the sea's surface. As there was neither wind nor rain at the time, the phenomenon could only be ascribed to an escape of air or gaseous vapours from the bottom of the sea. A similar phenomenon has been observed during visitations of pestilence, the surface of ponds becoming mottled or bubbling from an escape of vapour, which would be invisible when taking place on solid land. An instance of this kind was observed at Havre, in August 1832, when the Cholera prevailed in France. The citadel at Havre is surrounded by a deep ditch or fosse; and it was observed by many persons that the water in the fosse suddenly changed its colour and became muddy, while bubbles of air rose to the surface, causing an appearance of ebullition. At the same time the fish, chiefly eels, which usually remain at the bottom, were seen to spring above the surface of the water with a convulsive movement, and then to drop again languid and heavy; and in a few hours the surface of the fosse was covered with dead fish.

The adjoining sea was likewise affected by this poisonous influence, for the shore was covered with a quantity of dead fish. It was immediately after this phenomenon that the Cholera broke out in Havre.

We have already said that when the scourge of a great pestilence falls on the human species, it is often the case that the beasts of the field, the fish of the sea and rivers, and even the plants and crops of the earth, are afflicted to an unusual extent with disease. Webster has remarked that pestilence, murrain, and famine occur simultaneously. This was certainly the case as regards the earliest great pestilence of which we have a record; for, as stated in Scripture, the plague of blotches and blains, murrain of beasts, and the blight producing a dearth of corn, all visited Egypt in close succession. Let us note some other instances. In A.D. 1222, a pestilence which destroyed one hundred thousand persons raged in Scotland, and simultaneously multitudes of dead fish were washed ashore on the British coasts. "In 1240," says Webster, "mortal diseases prevailed; and authors relate that the fish on the English coast had a battle in which eleven whales and a multitude of other fish were slain and cast ashore. The cause to which this phenomenon was ascribed," he adds, "although ludicrous enough, is important; for it strengthens modern observation that when pestilential diseases prevail on the surface of the earth, fish often perish beneath the waters;" During the Black Death, especially, a pestilential influence affected all kinds of the lower animals, as well as man. A fatal murrain broke out, and in England three thousand sheep died in one pasturage alone; and in this case, as also during the murrain in West Africa, it is said that both the birds and beasts of prey refrained from touching the carcasses. At the same time immense quantities of dead fish were cast ashore, whose bodies were found to be covered with blotches. The birds of the air likewise died. And Dimerbroeck also states, as a fact which he frequently observed, that whenever the birds confined in cages died, the inhabitants of the house were invariably attacked shortly after by the plague.

In conclusion, we can affirm with reasonable assurance, what at the outset we suggested interrogatively, that the cause of the grand epidemics which from time to time desolate the world lies beyond the sphere of human action, and is to be found in a morbid disturbance, or sickening, in the Earth itself. Unquestionably those great plagues, like common diseases, are intensi-

fied in their severity by defective sanitary arrangements, and are propagated by contagion to some extent beyond the actual zones or region of morbid telluric action; but still, unlike smallpox, typhus, and some other diseases — whose origin may be ascribed wholly to vicious conditions of human life — the occurrence of those great earth-born epidemics is wholly beyond the control of man. They are deadly influences, of cosmical origin — maladies which swoop down upon mankind as from a higher world almost beyond his ken, — a morbid breath which sweeps over the face of earth, and which, although exhaling from our globe, has its exciting cause in the varying movements and conditions in the far-off world of orbs which surrounds us.

Civilized man has wrought wonders on the earth. His mission is to conquer external nature — to subdue or control the obstacles and adverse forces which the external world presents to him. And nobly has he worked in this great task. Himself a part of nature, by his intrinsic powers — the godlike soul within him — he has subjugated many of the forces of external nature, and employed them to neutralize forces which are adverse to him, and remove the obstacles which surround him. Instead of living in caves in the rocks, as at first, man has seized upon the rocks themselves, transporting them whither he will, and building them into houses and cities — mansions of rock which he shapes at his pleasure, rearing them into grand and beautiful edifices, in which he may suitably pay his homage to the Supreme Being, or where the higher functions of the national life may be carried on, and also into commodious dwellings, stable as the rock itself, but shaped to meet every want and refinement of common life. Instead of clothing himself in skins — instead of finding a covering for himself only by robbing lower animals of theirs — he now lays the world under contribution. The tall grasses of the East, the flax of our own climate, the cotton-plant with its marvellous powers of usefulness, the labour of the silkworm, and the yearly crop of superfluous wool on sheep and goat, are all turned to account as raiment; while the depths of the sea, and the mines of the rock, are ransacked for the pearls, gems, and precious metals, to enrich that raiment with ornaments. From the dull black rocks of our coal-beds we get a supply of fire and light for our homes — turning winter into summer, and night into day. In water we find an endless supply of force, as steam, to do work which otherwise we should have to do ourselves; while

by the railway, every valley is exalted and every hill is brought low, as we give to ourselves a rapidity of locomotion far exceeding that of the swiftest quadruped, and outstripping in continuous action even the flight of birds. The glow of the sunshine itself will by and by be turned to account as an inexhaustible source of motive power. Even the most subtle and mysterious force in nature with which man has yet become acquainted, the electric fluid, has been tamed to his use; whereby space seems annihilated at our will, by a messenger which speeds faster even than the Earth revolves on its axis, — so that, judging by apparent time, we actually receive tidings of an event at Calcutta several hours before that event has happened!

But still there are forces far beyond man's control; and the knowledge which is marvellously increasing his power serves at the same time to reveal to him an outer world of agencies, directly affecting his fortunes and condition, but which must ever remain far beyond his reach — agencies which at present are mysteries to him, and which, even fully understood, will remain as utterly beyond his influence or control as are the movements of the stars in their courses. Such agencies are those which give birth to great epidemics, like the two upon which we have specially commented. Just as in Agriculture, although we have

carried the productive power of the soil to almost its highest point, it is the character of the seasons, shortly called the Weather, which mainly determines the amount of harvest-produce; even so, however perfect may be our sanitary arrangements, the health of the nations is ever and anon seriously affected by changes in the condition of the earth itself. We read in Scripture that "the stars in their courses fought against Sisera;" and in literal truth, and with scientific accuracy, the same phrase may be employed now to many events deeply affecting the fortunes of mankind. Astrology in its old form is a myth of the past; the notion that a man's fortunes are dependent upon the planet which was in the zenith at his birth is a baseless illusion. But we make bold to say that Astrology in its new sense — the influence upon earth of the varying positions and condition of the surrounding orbs — will ere long rise into a grand importance undreamt of at present. Many of the grander circumstances affecting human life — such as the character of the seasons, the good and bad harvests, tempests, earthquakes, and pestilence — will ere long be found to be as dependent upon the influence of the starry and planetary orbs which surround us, as the ebb and flow of the ocean are due to the varying position and influence of our satellite the moon.

R. H. PATTERSON.

DR. ISAAC I. HAYES, the geographer, and a marine painter, named William Bradford, chartered a vessel in June last, and, furnishing themselves with appropriate assistants and materials, went upon a voyage to the land of storms and icebergs, returning from the expedition a few days ago. Dr. Hayes made some observations, which will interest the scientific world; and Mr. Bradford added many interesting sketches to his portfolio; but the most tangible result of the voyage was a collection of very successful photographs, numbering many hundred specimens. An account of the expedition will be published in due time; and it is in contemplation, as I understand, to have the photographs exhibited for the benefit of the public.

If any new arrival subscribes to this paper for six months, he or she may enjoy the following privileges: an apartment, a servant, a good place in St. Peter's, a guide book of Rome, an Agnus Dei, and leave to abstain from fasting. All these are immediately found for them at less than half the usual price. Neither the ex-Queen of Spain nor the Comte de Chambord is now expected. The ex-Duke of Parma and his wife have taken a floor in the Palazzo Spada, merely to be nearer to the Farnese Palace. Apartments and carriages are already enormously dear."

A LETTER from Rome states that only 650 stalls have been erected in the hall of the Council at St. Peter's. "A newspaper, the Roman Correspondence, has just started a pious specula-

The female education movement has been so slow in India that we were unprepared for a full-grown authoress. A Bengalee lady, already known to local fame, Kailasibasini Dubi, has now produced a new work in prose and verse — "Vishnu Shobha," comprising "tender effusions on the beauty of the creation and mercy of the Creator."

By Anthony Trollope, Editor of Saint Pauls.
THE TURKISH BATH.

It was in the month of August. The world had gone to the moors and the Rhine, but we were still kept in town by the exigencies of our position. We had been worked hard during the preceding year, and were not quite as well as our best friends might have wished us;—and we resolved upon taking a Turkish bath. This little story records the experience of one individual man; but our readers, we hope, will, without a grudge, allow us the use of the editorial we. We doubt whether the story could be told at all in any other form. We resolved upon taking a Turkish bath, and at about three o'clock in the day we strutted from the outer to the inner room of the establishment, in that light costume, and with that air of Arabic dignity which are peculiar to the place.

As everybody has not taken a Turkish bath in Jermyn Street, we will give the shortest possible description of the position. We had entered of course, in the usual way, leaving our hat and our boots and our "valuables" among the numerous respectable assistants who throng the approaches; and as we had entered we had observed a stout, middle-aged gentleman on the other side of the street, clad in vestments somewhat the worse for wear, and to our eyes particularly noticeable by reason of the tattered condition of his gloves. A well-to-do man may have no gloves, or may simply carry in his hands those which appertain to him rather as a thing of custom than for any use for which he requires them. But a tattered glove, worn on the hand, is to our eyes the surest sign of a futile attempt at outer respectability. It is melancholy to us beyond expression. Our brother editors, we do not doubt, are acquainted with the tattered glove, and have known the sadness which it produces. If there be an editor whose heart has not been softened by the feminine tattered glove, that editor is not our brother. In this instance the tattered glove was worn by a man; and though the usual indication of poor circumstances was conveyed, there was nevertheless something jaunty in the gentleman's step, which preserved him from the desecration of pity. We barely saw him, but still were thinking of him as we passed into the building with the oriental letters on it, and took off our boots, and pulled out our watch and purse.

We were of course, accommodated with two checked towels; and, having in vain attempted to show that we were to the

manner born by fastening the larger of them satisfactorily round our own otherwise naked person, had obtained the assistance of those very skilful eastern boys, who glide about the place, and create envy by their familiarity with its mysteries. With an absence of all bashfulness, which soon grows upon one, we had divested ourselves of our ordinary trappings, beneath the gaze of five or six young men, lying on surrounding sofas, — among whom we recognized young Walker of the Treasury, and hereby testify on his behalf, that he looks almost as fine a fellow without his clothes, as he does with them, — and had strutted through the doorway into the bath-room, trailing our second towel behind us. Having observed the matter closely in the course of perhaps half-a-dozen visits, we are prepared to recommend that mode of entry to our young friends as being at the same time easy and oriental. There are those who wear the second towel as a shawl, thereby no doubt achieving a certain decency of garb; but this is done to the utter loss of all dignity; and a feminine appearance is produced, — such as is sometimes that of a lady of fifty looking after her maid-servants at seven o'clock in the morning, and intending to dress again before breakfast. And some there are who carry it under the arm, — simply as a towel; but these are they who, from English perversity, wilfully rob the institution of that picturesque orientalism, which should be its greatest charm. A few are able to wear the article as a turban, and that no doubt, should be done by all who are competent to achieve the position. We have observed that men who can do so, enter the bath-room with an air, and are received there with a respect which no other arrangement of the towel will produce. We have tried this; but as the turban gets over our eyes, and then falls altogether off our brow, we have abandoned it. In regard to personal deportment, depending partly on the step, somewhat on the eye, but chiefly on the costume, it must be acknowledged that "the attempt, and not the deed, confounds us." It is not every man who can carry a blue towel as a turban, and look like an Arab in the streets of Cairo, as he walks slowly down the room in Jermyn Street, with his arms crossed on his naked breast. The attempt, and not the deed does confound one shockingly. We, therefore, recommend that the second towel should be trailed. The effect is good, and there is no difficulty in the trailing which may not be overcome.

We had trailed our way into the bath-

room, and had slowly walked to one of those arm-chairs, in which it is our custom on such occasions to seat ourselves, and to await sudation. There are marble couches; and if a man be able to lie on stone for half-an-hour without a movement beyond that of clapping his hands, or a sound beyond a hollow-voiced demand for water, the effect is not bad. But he loses everything if he tosses himself uneasily on his hard couch, and we acknowledge that our own elbows are always in the way of our own comfort, and that our bones become sore. We think that the marble sofas must be intended for the younger Turks. If a man can stretch himself on stone without suffering for the best part of an hour, — or, more bravely perhaps, without appearing to suffer, let him remember that all is not done even then. Very much will depend on the manner in which he claps his hands, and the hollowness of the voice in which he calls for water. There should, we think, be two blows of the palms. One is very weak, and proclaims its own futility. Even to dull London ears it seems at once to want the Eastern tone. We have heard three given effectively, but we think that it requires much practice; and even when it is perfect, the result is that of Western impatience rather than of Eastern gravity. No word should be pronounced beyond that one word, — *Water*. The effect should be as though the whole mind were so devoted to the sudorific process as to admit of no extraneous idea. There should seem to be almost an agony in the effort, — as though the man enduring it, conscious that with success he would come forth a god, was aware that being as yet but mortal, he may perish in the attempt. Two claps of the hand, and a call for water, and that repeated with an interval of ten minutes, are all the external signs of life that the young Turkish bather may allow to himself while he is stretched upon his marble couch.

We had taken a chair, — well aware that nothing god-like could be thus achieved, and contented to obtain the larger amount of comfort. The chairs are placed two and two, and a custom has grown up, — of which we scarcely think that the origin has been eastern, — in accordance with which, friends occupying these chairs will spend their time in conversation. The true devotee to the Turkish baths will, we think, never speak at all; but when the speaking is low in tone, just something between a whisper and an articulate sound, the slight murmuring hum produced is not disagreeable. We cannot quite make up our mind

whether this use of the human voice be or be not oriental; but we think that it adds to the mystery, and upon the whole it gratifies. Let it be understood, however, that harsh, resonant, clearly-expressed speech is damnable. The man who talks aloud to his friend about the trivial affairs of life is selfish, ignorant, unpoetical, — and English in the very worst sense of the word. Who but an ass proud of his own capacity for braying, would venture to dispel the illusions of a score of bathers, by observing aloud that the House sat till three o'clock that morning?

But though friends may talk in low voices, a man without a friend will hardly fall into conversation at the Turkish Bath. It is said that our countrymen are unapt to speak to each other without introduction, and this inaptitude is certainly not decreased by the fact that two men meet each other with nothing on but a towel apiece. Finding yourself next to a man in such a garb, you hardly know where to begin. And then there lies upon you the weight of that necessity of maintaining a certain dignity of deportment grown upon you since you succeeded in freeing yourself from your socks and trousers.

For ourselves, we have to admit that the difficulty is much increased by the fact that we are shortsighted, and are obligated by the sudorific processes and by the shampooing and washing that are to come, to leave our spectacles behind us. The delicious wonder of the place is no doubt increased to us, but our incapability of discerning aught of those around us in that low gloomy light is complete. Jones from Friday Street, or even Walker from the Treasury, are the same to us as one of those Asiatic slaves who administer to our comfort, and flit about the place with admirable decorum and self-respect. On this occasion we had barely seated ourselves, when another bather, with slow, majestic step, came to the other chair; and, with a manner admirably adapted to the place, stretching out his naked legs, and throwing back his naked shoulders, seated himself beside us. We are much given to speculations on the characters and probable circumstances of those with whom we are brought in contact. Our editorial duties require that it should be so. How should we cater for the public did we not observe the public in all its moods? We thought that we could see at once that this was no ordinary man, and we may as well aver here, at the beginning of our story, that subsequent circumstances proved our first conceptions to be correct. The absolute

features of the gentleman we did not, indeed, see plainly. The gloom of the place and our own deficiency of sight forbade it. But we could discern the thorough man of the world, the traveller who had seen many climes, the cosmopolitan to whom East and West were alike, in every motion that he made. We confess that we were anxious for conversation, and that we struggled within ourselves for an apt subject, thinking how we might begin. But the apt subject did not occur to us, and we should have passed that half hour of repose in silence had not our companion been more ready than ourselves. "Sir," said he, turning round in his seat with a peculiar and captivating grace, "I shall not, I hope, offend or transgress any rule of politeness by speaking to a stranger." There was ease and dignity in his manner, and at the same time some slight touch of humour which was very charming. I thought that I detected just a hint of an Irish accent in his tone; but if so the dear brogue of his country, which is always delightful to me, had been so nearly banished by intercourse with other tongues as to leave the matter still a suspicion, — a suspicion or rather a hope.

"By no means," he answered, turning round on our left shoulder, but missing the grace with which he had made his movement.

"There is nothing," said he, "to my mind so absurd as that two men should be seated together for an hour without venturing to open their mouths because they do not know each other. And what matter does it make whether a man has his breeches on or is without them?"

My hope had now become an assurance. As he named the article of clothing which peculiarly denotes a man he gave a picturesque emphasis to the word which was certainly Hibernian. Who does not know the dear sound? And, as a chance companion for a few idle minutes, is there any one so likely to prove himself agreeable as a well-informed, travelled Irishman?

"And yet," said we, "men do depend much on their outward paraphernalia."

"Indeed and they do," said our friend.

"And why? Because they can trust their tailors when they can't trust themselves. Give me the man who can make a speech without any of the accessories of the pulpit, who can preach what sermon there is in him without a pulpit." His words were energetic, but his voice was just suited to the place. Had he spoken aloud, so that others might have heard him, we should have left our chair, and have retreated to

one of the inner and hotter rooms at the moment. His words were perfectly audible, but he spoke in a fitting whisper. "It is a part of my creed," he continued, "that we should never lose even a quarter of an hour. What a strange mass of human beings one finds in this city of London!"

"A mighty mass, but not without a plan," we replied.

"Bedad, — and it's hard enough to find the plan," said he. It struck me that after that he rose into a somewhat higher flight of speech, as though he had remembered and was desirous of dropping his country. It is the customary and perhaps the only fault of an Irishman. "Whether it be there or not, we can expatriate free, as the poet says. How unintelligible is London! New York or Constantinople one can understand, — or even Paris. One knows what the world is doing in these cities, and what men desire."

"What men desire is nearly the same in all cities," we remarked, — and not without truth, as we think.

"Is it money you mane?" he said, again relapsing. "Yes; money, no doubt, is the grand desideratum, — the 'to prepon,' the 'to kalon,' the 'to pan!'" Plato and Pope were evidently at his fingers' ends. We did not conclude from this slight evidence that he was thoroughly imbued with the works either of the poet or the philosopher; but we hold that for the ordinary purposes of conversation a superficial knowledge of many things goes further than an intimacy with one or two. "Money," continued he, "is everything, no doubt; rem, — rem; rem, si possis recte, si non —; you know the rest. I don't complain of that. I like money myself. I know its value. I've had it, and, — I'm not ashamed to say it, sir, — I've been without it."

"Our sympathies are completely with you in reference to the latter position," we said, — remembering, with a humility which we hope is natural to us, that we were not always editors.

"What I complain of is," said our new friend still whispering, as he passed his hand over his arms and legs, to learn whether the temperature of the room was producing its proper effect, "that if a man here in London have a diamond, or a pair of boots, or any special skill at his command, he cannot take his article to the proper mart, and obtain for it the proper price."

"Can he do that in Constantinople?" we inquired.

"Much better and more accurately than he can in London. And so he can in Paris!" We did not believe this; but as we were thinking after what fashion we would express our doubts, he branched off so quickly to a matter of supply and demand with which we were specially interested, that we lost the opportunity of arguing the general question. "A man of letters," he said, "a capable and instructed man of letters, can always get a market for his wares in Paris."

"A capable and instructed man of letters will do so in London," we said, "as soon as he proved his claims. He must prove them in Paris before they can be allowed."

"Yes; — he must prove them. By-the-by, will you have a cheroot?" So saying, he stretched out his hand, and took from the marble slab beside him two cheroots, which he had placed there. He then proceeded to explain that he did not bring in his case because of the heat, but that he was always "muni," — that was his phrase, — with a couple, in the hope that he might meet an acquaintance with whom to share them. I accepted his offer, and when we had walked round the chamber to a light provided for the purpose, we re-seated ourselves. His manner of moving about the place was so good that I felt it to be a pity that he should ever have on a rag more than he wore at present. His tobacco, I must own, did not appear to me to be of the first class; but then I am not in the habit of smoking cheroots, and am no judge of the merits of the weed as grown in the East. "Yes; — a man in Paris must prove his capability; but then how easily he can do it, if the fact to be proved be there! And how certain is the mart, if he have the thing to sell!"

We immediately denied that in this respect there was any difference between the two capitals, pointing out what we believe to be a fact, — that in one capital as in the other, there exists, and must ever exist, extreme difficulty in proving the possession of an art so difficult to define as capability of writing for the press. "Nothing but success can prove it," we said, as we slapped our thigh with an energy altogether unbecoming our position as a Turkish bather.

"A man may have a talent then, and he cannot use it till he have used it! He may possess a diamond, and cannot sell it till he have it! What is a man to do who wishes to engage himself in any of the multifarious duties of the English press? How is he to begin? In New York I can tell such a one where to go at once. Let him show in con-

versation that he is an educated man, and they will give him a trial on the staff of any newspaper; — they will let him run his venture for the pages of any magazine. He may write his fingers off here, and not an editor of them all will read a word that he writes."

Here he touched us, and we were indignant. When he spoke of the magazine we knew that he was wrong. "With newspapers," we said, "we imagine it to be impossible that contributors should from the outside world be looked at; but papers sent to the magazines, — at any rate to some of them, — are read."

"I believe," said he, "that a little farce is kept up. They keep a boy to look at a line or two and then return the manuscript. The pages are filled by the old stock-writers, who are sure of the market let them send what they will, — padding-mongers who work eight hours a day and hardly know what they write about." We again loudly expressed our opinion that he was wrong, and that there did exist magazines, the managers of which were sedulously anxious to obtain the assistance of what he called literary capacity, wherever they could find it. Sitting there at the Turkish bath with nothing but a towel round us, we could not declare ourselves to a perfect stranger, and we think that as a rule editors should be impalpable; — but we did express our opinion very strongly.

"And you believe," said he, with something of scorn in his voice, "that if a man who had been writing English for the press in other countries, — in New York say, or in Dublin, — a man of undoubted capacity, mind you, were to make the attempt here, in London, he would get a hearing."

"Certainly he would," said we.

"And would any editor see him unless he came with an introduction from some special friend?"

We paused a moment before we answered this, because the question was to us one having a very special meaning. Let an editor do his duty with ever so pure a conscience, let him spend all his days and half his nights reading manuscripts and holding the balance fairly between the public and those who wish to feed the public, let his industry be never so unwearied and his impartiality never so unflinching, still he will, if possible, avoid the pain of personally repelling those to whom he is obliged to give an unfavourable answer. But we at the Turkish Bath were quite impalpable to the outer world, and might hazard an opinion, as any stranger might have done. And we have seen very many such visitors as those

to whom our friend alluded; and may, perhaps, see many more.

"Yes," said we. "An editor might or might not see such a gentleman; but, if pressed, no doubt he would. An English editor would be quite as likely to do so as a French editor." This we declared with energy, having felt ourselves to be ruffled by the assertion that these things are managed better in Paris or in New York than in London.

"Then, Mr. —, would you give me an interview, if I call with a little manuscript which I have to-morrow morning?" said my Irish friend, addressing us with a beseeching tone, and calling us by the very name by which we are known among our neighbours and tradesmen. We felt that everything was changed between us, and that the man had plunged a dagger into us.

Yes; he had plunged a dagger into us. Had we had our clothes on, had we felt ourselves to possess at the moment our usual form of life, we think that we could have rebuked him. As it was we could only rise from our chair, throw away the fag end of the filthy cheroot which he had given us, and clap our hands half-a-dozen times for the Asiatic to come and shampoo us. But the Irishman was at our elbow. "You will let me see you tomorrow?" he said. "My name is Molloy, — Michael Molloy. I have not a card about me, because my things are outside there."

"A card would do no good at all," we said, again clapping our hands for the shampooer.

"I may call, then?" said Mr. Michael Molloy.

"Certainly; — yes, you can call if you please." Then, having thus ungraciously acceded to the request made to us, we sat down on the marble bench and submitted ourselves to the black attendant. During the whole of the following operation, while the man was pummelling our breast and poking our ribs, and pinching our toes, — while he was washing us down afterwards, and reducing us gradually from the warm water to the cold, — we were thinking of Mr. Michael Molloy, and the manner in which he had entrapped us into a confidential conversation. The scoundrel must have plotted it from the very first, must have followed us into the bath, and taken his seat beside us with a deliberately premeditated scheme. He was, too, just the man whom we should not have chosen to see with a worthless magazine article in his hand. We think that we can be efficacious by letter, but we often feel ourselves to be weak

when brought face to face with our enemies. At that moment our anger was hot against Mr. Molloy. And yet we were conscious of a something of pride which mingled with our feelings. It was clear to us that Mr. Molloy was no ordinary person; and it did in some degree gratify our feelings that such a one should have taken so much trouble to encounter us. We had found him to be a well-informed, pleasant gentleman; and the fact that he was called Molloy and desired to write for the magazine over which we presided, could not really be taken as detracting from his merits. There had doubtless been a fraud committed on us, — a palpable fraud. The man had extracted assurances from us by a false pretence that he did not know us. But then the idea, on his part, that anything could be gained by his doing so, was in itself a compliment to us. That such a man should take so much trouble to approach us, — one who could quote Horace and talk about the "to kalon," — was an acknowledgment of our power. As we returned to the outer chamber we looked round to see Mr. Molloy in his usual garments, but he was not as yet there. We waited while we smoked one of our own cigars, but he came not. He had, so far, gained his object; and, as we presumed, preferred to run the risk of too long a course of hot air to risking his object by seeing us again on that afternoon. At last we left the building, and are bound to confess that our mind dwelt much on Mr. Michael Molloy during the remainder of that evening.

It might be that after all we should gain much by the singular mode of introduction which the man had adopted. He was certainly clever, and if he could write as well as he could talk his services might be of value. Punctually at the hour named he was announced, and we did not now for one moment think of declining the interview. Mr. Molloy had so far gained his object that we could not resort to the certainly not unusual practice of declaring ourselves to be too closely engaged to see any one, and of sending him word that he should confide to writing whatever he might have to say to us. It had, too, occurred to us that, as Mr. Molloy had paid his three shillings and sixpence for the Turkish Bath, he would not prove to be one of that class of visitors whose appeals to tender-hearted editors are so peculiarly painful. "I am willing to work day and night for my wife and children; and if you will use this short paper in your next number it will save us from starvation for a month! Yes, sir, from, — starvation!" Who is to resist

such an appeal as that, or to resent it. But the editor knows that he is bound in honesty to resist it altogether,—so to steel himself against it that it shall have no effect upon him, at least, as regards the magazine which is in his hands; and yet if the short thing be only decently written, if it be not absurdly bad, what harm will its publication do to any one! If the waste,—let us call it a waste,—of half-a-dozen pages will save a family from hunger for a month, will they not be well wasted? But yet, again, such tenderness is absolutely incompatible with common honesty,—and equally so with common prudence. We think that our readers will see the difficulty, and understand how an editor may wish to avoid those interviews with tattered gloves. But my friend, Mr. Michael Molloy, had had three and sixpence to spend on a Turkish Bath, had had money wherewith to buy,—certainly, the very vilest of cigars. We thought of all this as Mr. Michael Molloy was ushered into our room.

The first thing we saw was the tattered glove; and then we immediately recognized the stout middle-aged gentleman whom we had seen on the other side of Jermyn Street as we entered the bathing establishment. It had never occurred to us that the two persons were the same,—not though the impression made by the poverty-stricken appearance of the man in the street had remained distinct upon our mind. The features of the gentleman we had hardly even yet seen at all. Nevertheless we had known and distinctly recognized his outward gait and mien, both with and without his clothes. One tattered glove he now wore, and the other he carried in his gloved hand. As we saw this we were aware at once that all our preconception had been wrong, that too common appeal would be made, and that we must resist it as best we might.

There was still a certain jauntiness in his air as he addressed us. "I hope thin," said he as we shook hands with him, "ye'll not take amiss the little ruse by which we caught ye."

"It was a ruse then, Mr. Molloy."

"Divil a doubt o' that, Mr. Editor."

"But you were coming to the Turkish Bath independently of our visit there?"

"Sorrow a bath I'd've cum at all, only I saw you go into the place. I'd just five and ninepence in my pocket, and says I to myself, Mick, me boy, it's a good investment. There was three and sixpence for them savages to rub me down, and threepence for the two cheroots from the little shop round the corner. I wish they'd been better for your sake."

It had been a plant from beginning to end, and the "to kalon" and the half-dozen words from Horace had all been parts of Mr. Molloy's little game! And how well he had played it! The outward trappings of the man as we now saw them were poor and mean, and he was mean-looking too, because of his trappings. But there had been nothing mean about him as he strutted along with a blue-checked towel round his body. How well the fellow had understood it all, and had known his own capacity! "And now that you are here, Mr. Molloy, what can we do for you?" we said with as pleasant a smile as we were able to assume. Of course we knew what was to follow. Out came the roll of paper of which we had already seen the end projecting from his breast pocket, and we were assured that we should find the contents of it exactly the thing for our magazine. There is no longer any diffidence in such matters,—no reticence in preferring claims and singing one's own praises. All that has gone by since competitive examination has become the order of the day. No man, no woman, no girl, no boy, hesitates now to declare his or her own excellence and capability. "It's just a short thing on social manners," said Mr. Molloy, "and if ye'll be so good as to cast ye'r eye over it, I think ye'll find I've hit the nail on the head. 'The Five o'clock Tay-table,' is what I've called it."

"Oh;—the five o'clock tea-table."

"Don't ye like the name?"

"About social manners, is it?"

"Just a rap on the knuckles for some of them. Sharp, short, and decisive! I don't doubt but what ye'll like it."

To declare, as though by instinct, that that was not the kind of thing we wanted, was as much a matter of course as it is for a man buying a horse to say that he does not like the brute's legs or that he falls away in his quarters. And Mr. Molloy treated our objection just as does the horse-dealer those of his customers. He assured us with a smile,—with a smile behind which we could see the craving eagerness of his heart,—that his little article was just the thing for us. Our immediate answer was of course ready. If he would leave the paper with us, we would look at it and return it if it did not seem to suit us. There is a half promise about this reply which too often produces a false satisfaction in the breast of a beginner. With such a one it is the second interview which is to be dreaded. But my friend Mr. Molloy was not new to the work, and was aware that if possible he should make further use of the occasion which he had earned for himself at

so considerable a cost. "Ye'll read it; — will ye?" he said.

"Oh, certainly. We'll read it certainly."

"And ye'll use it if ye can?"

"As to that, Mr. Molloy, we can say nothing. We've got to look solely to the interest of the periodical."

"And, sure, what can ye do better for the periodical than print a paper like that, which there is not a lady at the West End of the town won't be certain to read?"

"At any rate we'll look at it, Mr. Molloy," said we, standing up from our chair.

But still he hesitated in his going, — and did not go. "I'm a married man, Mr. —," he said. We simply bowed our head at the announcement. "I wish you could see Mrs. Molloy," he added. We muttered something as to the pleasure it would give us to make the acquaintance of so estimable a lady. "There isn't a better woman than herself this side of heaven, though I say it that oughtn't," said he. "And we've three young ones." We knew the argument that was coming; — knew it so well, and yet were so unable to accept it as any argument! "Sit down one moment, Mr. —," he continued, "till I tell you a short story." We pleaded our engagements, averring that they were peculiarly heavy at that moment. "Sure, and we know what that manes," said Mr. Molloy. "It's just, — walk out of this as quick as you came in. It's that what it manes." And yet as he spoke there was a twinkle of humour in his eye that was almost irresistible; and we ourselves, — we could not forbear to smile. When we smiled we knew that we were lost. "Come, now, Mr. Editor; when you think how much it cost me to get the introduction, you'll listen to me for five minutes any way."

"We will listen to you," we said, resuming our chair, — remembering as we did so the three-and-sixpence, the two cigars, the "to kalon," the line from Pope, and the half line from Horace. The man had taken much trouble with the view of placing himself where he now was. When we had been all but naked together I had taken him to be the superior of the two, and what were we that we should refuse him an interview simply because he had wares to sell which we should only be too willing to buy at his price if they were fit for our use?

Then he told his tale. As for Paris, Constantinople, and New York, he frankly admitted that he knew nothing of those capitals. When we reminded him, with some ill-nature as we thought afterwards, that he had assumed an intimacy with the current litera-

ture of the three cities, he told us that such remarks were "just the sparkling gins of conversation in which a man shouldn't expect to find real diamonds." Of "Dublin" he knew every street, every lane, every newspaper, every editor; but the poverty, dependence, and general poorness of a provincial press had crushed him, and he had boldly resolved to try a fight in the "metropolis of litherature." He referred us to the managers of the "Boyne Bouncer," the "Clontarf Chronicle," the "Donnybrook Debater," and the "Echoes of Erin," assuring us that we should find him to be as well esteemed as known in the offices of those widely-circulated publications. His reading he told us was unbounded, and the pen was as ready to his hand as is the plough to the hand of the husbandman. Did we not think it a noble ambition in him thus to throw himself into the great "areanay" as he called it, and try his fortune in the "metropolis of litherature?" He paused for a reply, and we were driven to acknowledge that whatever might be said of our friend's prudence, his courage was undoubted. "I've got it here," said he. "I've got it all here." And he touched his right breast with the fingers of his left hand, which still wore the tattered glove.

He had succeeded in moving us. "Mr. Molloy," we said, "we'll read your paper, and we'll then do the best we can for you. We must tell you fairly that we hardly like your subject, but if the writing be good you can try your hand at something else."

"Sure there's nothing under the sun I won't write upon at your bidding."

"If we can be of any service to you, Mr. Molloy, we will." Then the editor broke down, and the man spoke to the man. "I need not tell you, Mr. Molloy, that the heart of one man of letters always warms to another."

"It was because I knew ye was of that sort that I followed ye in yonder," he said, with a tear in his eye.

The butter-boat of benevolence was in our hand, and we proceeded to pour out its contents freely. It is a vessel which an editor should lock up carefully; and, should he lose the key, he will not be the worse for the loss. We need not repeat here all the pretty things that we said to him, explaining to him from a full heart with how much agony we were often compelled to resist the entreaties of literary suppliants, declaring to him how we had longed to publish tons of manuscript, — simply in order that we might give pleasure to those who brought them to us. We told him how accessible we were to a woman's tear, to a man's struggle, to a

girl's face, and assured him of the daily wounds which were inflicted on ourselves by the impossibility of reconciling our duties with our sympathies. "Bedad, thin," said Mr. Molloy, grasping our hand, "you'll find none of that difficulty wid me. If you'll sympathize like a man, I'll work for you like a horse." We assured him that we would, really thinking it probable that he might do some useful work for the magazine; and then we again stood up waiting for his departure.

"Now I'll tell ye the plain truth," said he, "and ye may do just as ye please about it. There isn't an ounce of tay or a pound of mait along with Mrs. Molloy this moment; and, what's more, there isn't a shilling between us to buy it. I never begged in my life;—not yet. But if you can advance me a sovereign on that manuscript, it will save me from taking the coat on my back to a pawnbroker's shop for whatever it'll fetch there." We paused a moment as we thought of it all, and then we handed him the coin for which he asked us. If the manuscript should be worthless the loss would be our own. We would not grudge a slice from the wholesome home-made loaf after we had used the butter-boat of benevolence. "It don't become me," said Mr. Molloy, "to thank you for such a thrife as a loan of twenty shillings; but I'll never forget the feeling that has made you listen to me, and that too after I had been down on you rather at thim baths." We gave him a kindly nod of the head, and then he took his departure. "Ye'll see me again anyways?" he said, and we promised that we would.

We were anxious enough about the manuscript, but we could not examine it at that moment. When our office work was done we walked home with the roll in our pocket, speculating as we went on the probable character of Mr. Molloy. We still believed in him,—still believed in him in spite of the manner in which he had descended in his language, and had fallen into a natural flow of words which alone would not have given much promise of him as a man of letters. But a human being, in regard to his power of production, is the reverse of a rope. He is as strong as his strongest part, and, remembering the effect which Molloy's words had had upon us at the Turkish Bath, we still thought that there must be something in him. If so, how pleasant would it be to us to place such a man on his legs,—modestly on his legs, so that he might earn for his wife and bairns that meat and tea which he had told us that they were now lacking. An editor is always striving to

place some one modestly on his legs in literature,—on his or her,—striving, and alas! so often failing. Here had come a man in regard to whom, as I walked home with his manuscript in my pocket, I did feel rather sanguine.

Of all the rubbish that I ever read in my life, that paper on the Five o'clock Teatable was, I think, the worst. It was not only vulgar, foolish, unconnected, and meaningless; but it was also ungrammatical and unintelligible even in regard to the wording of it. The very spelling was defective. The paper was one with which no editor, sub-editor, or reader would have found it necessary to go beyond the first ten lines before he would have known that to print it would have been quite out of the question. We went through with it because of our interest in the man; but as it was in the beginning, so it was to the end,—a farrago of wretched nonsense, so bad that no one, without experience in such matters, would believe it possible that even the writer should desire the publication of it! It seemed to us to be impossible that Mr. Molloy should ever have written a word for those Hibernian periodicals which he had named to us. He had got our sovereign; and with that, as far as we were concerned, there must be an end of Mr. Molloy. We doubted even whether he would come for his own manuscript.

But he came. He came exactly at the hour appointed, and when we looked at his face we felt convinced that he did not doubt his own success. There was an air of expectant triumph about him which dismayed us. It was clear enough that he was confident that he should take away with him the full price of his article, after deducting the sovereign which he had borrowed. "You like it thin," he said, before we had been able to compose our features to a proper form for the necessary announcement.

"Mr. Molloy," we said, "it will not do. You must believe us that it will not do."

"Not do?"

"No, indeed. We need not explain further;—but,—but,—you had really better turn your hand to some other occupation."

"Some other occupation!" he exclaimed, opening wide his eyes, and holding up both his hands.

"Indeed we think so, Mr. Molloy."

"And you've read it?"

"Every word of it;—on our honour."

"And you won't have it?"

"Well;—no, Mr. Molloy, certainly we cannot take it."

"Ye reject my article on the Five o'clock Tay-table!" Looking into his face as he spoke, we could not but be certain that its rejection was to him as astonishing as would have been its acceptance to the readers of the magazine. He put his hand up to his head and stood wondering. "I suppose ye'd better choose your own subject for yourself," he said, as though by this great surrender on his own part he was getting rid of all the difficulty on ours.

"Mr. Molloy," we began, "we may as well be candid with you —"

"I'll tell you what it is," said he, "I've taken such a liking to you there's nothing I won't do to please ye. I'll just put it in my pocket, and begin another for ye as soon as the children have had their bit of dinner." At last we did succeed, or thought that we succeeded, in making him understand that we regarded the case as being altogether hopeless, and were convinced that it was beyond his powers to serve us. "And I'm to be turned off like that," he said, bursting into open tears as he threw himself into a chair and hid his face upon the table. "Ah! wirra, wirra, what'll I do at all! Sure, and didn't I think it was fixed as firm between us as the Nelson monument! When ye hannelled me with the money, didn't I think it was as good as done and done?" I begged him not to regard the money, assuring him that he was welcome to the sovereign. "There's my wife 'll be brought to bed any day," he went on to say, "an' not a ha'porth of anything ready for it! 'Deed, thin, and the world's hard. The world's very hard!" And this was he who had talked to me about Constantinople and New York at the Baths, and had made me believe that he was a well-informed, well-to-do man of the world!

Even now we did not suspect that he was lying to us. Why he should be such as he seemed to be was a mystery; but even yet we believed in him after a fashion. That he was sorely disappointed and broken-hearted because of his wife, was so evident to us, that we offered him another sovereign, regarding it as the proper price of that butter-boat of benevolence, which we had permitted ourselves to use. But he repudiated our offer. "I've never begged," said he, "and, for myself, I'd sooner starve. And Mary Jane would sooner starve than I should beg. It will be best for us both to put an end to ourselves and to have done with it." This was very melancholy; and as he lay with his head upon the table, we did not see how we were to induce him to leave us.

"You'd better take the sovereign, — just for the present," we said.

"Niver!" said he, looking up for a moment, "niver!" And still he continued to sob. About this period of the interview, which before it was ended was a very long interview, we ourselves made a suggestion the imprudence of which we afterwards acknowledged to ourselves. We offered to go to his lodgings and see his wife and children. Though the man could not write a good magazine article, yet he might be a very fitting object for our own personal kindness. And the more we saw of the man, the more we liked him, — in spite of his incapacity. "The place is so poor," he said, objecting to our offer. After what had passed between us, we felt that that could be no reason against our visit, and we began for a moment to fear that he was deceiving us. "Not yet," he cried, "not quite yet. I will try once again; — once again. You will let me see you once more?"

"And you will take the other sovereign," we said, — trying him. He should have had the other sovereign if he would have taken it; but we confess that had he done so then we should have regarded him as an impostor. But he did not take it, and left us in utter ignorance as to his true character.

After an interval of three days he came again, and there was exactly the same appearance. He wore the same tattered clothes. He had not pawned his coat. There was the same hat, — shabby when observed closely, but still carrying a decent appearance when not minutely examined. In his face there was no sign of want, and at moments there was a cheeriness about him which was almost refreshing. "I've got a something this time that I think ye must like, — unless you're harder to please than Rhadhamanthus." So saying he tendered me another roll of paper, which I at once opened intending to read the first page of it. The essay was entitled the "Church of England; — a Question for the People." It was handed to me as having been written within the last three days; and, from its bulk, might have afforded fair work for a fortnight to a writer accustomed to treat of subjects of such weight. As we had expected, the first page was unintelligible, absurd, and farcical. We began to be very angry with ourselves for having placed ourselves in such a connection with a man so utterly unable to do that which he pretended to do. "I think I've hit it off now," said he watching our face as we were reading.

The reader need not be troubled with a

minute narrative of the circumstances as they occurred during the remainder of the interview. What had happened before was repeated very closely. He wondered, he remonstrated, he complained, and he wept. He talked of his wife and family, and talked as though up to this last moment he had felt confident of success. Judging from his face as he entered the room we did not doubt but that he had been confident. His subsequent despair was unbounded, and we then renewed our offer to call on his wife. After some hesitation he gave us an address in Hoxton, begging us to come after seven in the evening if it were possible. He again declined the offer of money, and left us, understanding that we would visit his wife on the following evening. "You are quite sure about the manuscript," he said as he left us. We replied that we were quite sure.

On the following day we dined early at our club and walked in the evening to the address which Mr. Molloy had given us in Hoxton. It was a fine evening in August, and our walk made us very warm. The street named was a decent little street, decent as far as cleanliness and newness could make it; but there was a melancholy sameness about it, and an apparent absence of object which would have been very depressing to our own spirits. It led no whither, and had been erected solely with the view of accommodating decent people with small incomes. We at once priced the houses in our mind at ten and sixpence a week, and believed them to be inhabited by pianoforte tuners, coach-builders, firemen, and public-office messengers. There was no squalor about the place, but it was melancholy, light-coloured, and depressive. We made our way to No. 14, and finding the door open entered the passage. "Come in," cried the voice of our friend; and in the little front parlour we found him seated with a child on each knee, while a winning little girl of about twelve was sitting in a corner of the room, mending her stockings. The room itself and the appearance of all around us were the very opposite of what we had expected. Everything no doubt was plain, — was, in a certain sense, poor; but nothing was poverty-stricken. The children were decently clothed, and apparently were well fed. Mr. Molloy himself, when he saw me, had that twinkle of humour in his eye which I had before observed, and seemed to be afflicted at the moment with none of that extreme agony which he had exhibited more than once in our presence. "Please, sir, mother ain't in from the hospital, — not yet," said the little girl rising up from her

chair; "but it's past seven and she won't be long." This announcement created some surprise. We had indeed heard that of Mrs. Molloy which might make it very expedient that she should seek the accommodation of an hospital, but we could not understand that in such circumstances she should be able to come home regularly at seven o'clock in the evening. Then there was a twinkle in our friend Molloy's eye which almost made us think for a moment that we had been made the subject of some, hitherto unintelligible, hoax. And yet there had been the man at the Baths in Jermyn Street, and the two manuscripts had been in our hands, and the man had wept as no man weeps for a joke. "You would come, you know," said Mr. Molloy, who had now put down the two bairns and had risen from his seat to greet us.

"We are glad to see you so comfortable," we replied.

"Father is quite comfortable, sir," said the little girl. We looked into Mr. Molloy's face and saw nothing but the twinkle in the eye. We had certainly been "done" by the most elaborate hoax that had ever been perpetrated. We did not regret the sovereign so much as those outpourings from the butter-boat of benevolence of which we felt that we had been cheated. "Here's mother," said the girl running to the door. Mr. Molloy stood grinning in the middle of the room with the youngest child again in his arms. He did not seem to be in the least ashamed of what he had done, and even at that moment conveyed to us more of liking for his affection for the little boy than of anger for the abominable prank that he had played us.

That he had lied throughout was evident as soon as we saw Mrs. Molloy. Whatever ailment might have made it necessary that she should visit the hospital, it was not one which could interfere at all with her power of going and returning. She was a strong, hearty-looking woman of about forty, with that mixture in her face of practical kindness with severity in details which we often see in strong-minded women who are forced to take upon themselves the management and government of those around them. She curtsied, and took off her bonnet and shawl, and put a bottle into a cupboard, as she addressed us. "Mick said as you was coming, sir, and I'm sure we is glad to see you; — only sorry for the trouble, sir."

We were so completely in the dark that we hardly knew how to be civil to her, — hardly knew whether we ought to be civil to her or not. "We don't quite understand why we've been brought here," we

said, endeavouring to maintain, at any rate, a tone of good-humour. He was still embracing the little boy, but there had now come a gleam of fun across his whole countenance, and he seemed to be almost shaking his sides with laughter. "Your husband represented himself as being in distress," we said gravely. We were restrained by a certain delicacy from informing the woman of the kind of distress to which Mr. Molloy had especially alluded, — most falsely.

"Lord love you, sir," said the woman, "just step in here." Then she led us into a little back-room in which there were a bedstead, and an old writing-desk, or *escritoire*, covered with papers. Her story was soon told. Her husband was a mad-man.

"Mad!" we said, preparing for escape from what might be to us most serious peril.

"He wouldn't hurt a mouse," said Mrs. Molloy. "As for the children, he's that good to them, there ain't a young woman in all London that'd be better at handling 'em." Then we heard her story, in which it appeared to us that downright affection for the man was the predominant characteristic. She herself was, as she told us, head day-nurse at Saint Patrick's Hospital, going there every morning at eight, and remaining till six or seven. For these services she received thirty shillings a week and her board, and she spoke of herself and her husband as being altogether removed from pecuniary distress. Indeed, while the money part of the question was being discussed, she opened a little drawer in the desk and handed us back our sovereign, — almost without an observation. Molloy himself had "come of decent people." On this point she insisted very often, and gave us to understand that he was at this moment in receipt of a pension of a hundred a year from his family. He had been well educated, she said, having been at Trinity College, Dublin, till he had been forced to leave his university for some slight, but repeated irregularity. Early in life he had proclaimed his passion for the press, and when he and she were married, absolutely was earning a living in Dublin by some use of the scissors and paste-pot. The whole tenor of his career I could not

learn, though Mrs. Molloy would have told us everything had time allowed. Even during the years of his sanity in Dublin he had only been half-sane, treating all the world around him with the effusions of his terribly fertile pen. "He'll write all night if I'll let him have a candle," said Mrs. Molloy. We asked her why she did let him have a candle, and made some inquiry as to the family expenditure in paper. The paper, she said, was given to him from the office of a newspaper which she would not name, and which Molloy visited regularly every day. "There ain't a man in all London works harder," said Mrs. Molloy. "He is mad. I don't say nothing against it. But there is some of it so beautiful, I wonder they don't print it." This was the only word she spoke with which we could not agree. "Ah, sir," said she; "you haven't seen his poetry!" We were obliged to tell her that seeing poetry was the bane of our existence.

There was an easy absence of sham about this woman, and an acceptance of life as it had come to her, which delighted us. She complained of nothing, and was only anxious to explain the little eccentricities of her husband. When we alluded to some of his marvellously untrue assertions, she stopped us at once. "He do lie," she said. "Certainly he do. How he makes 'em all out is wonderful. But he wouldn't hurt a fly." It was evident to us that she not only loved her husband, but admired him. She showed us heaps of manuscript with which the old drawers were crammed; and yet that paper on the Church of England had been new work, done expressly for us.

When the story had been told we went back to him, and he received us with a smile. "Good-bye, Molloy," we said. "Good-bye to you, sir," he replied, shaking hands with us. We looked at him closely, and could hardly believe that it was the man who had sat by us at the Turkish Bath.

He never troubled us again or came to our office, but we have often called on him, and have found that others of our class do the same. We have even helped to supply him with the paper which he continues to use, — we presume for the benefit of other editors.

From Chambers' Journal.
WALTER SCOTT AT WORK.

In the autumn of 1796, a firm of publishers in Edinburgh, of very little note in the trade, issued a thin octavo volume of translations from the ballads of Burger, which were then on the lips of every one who made any pretension to taste or sentiment. The volume bore no author's name; and with the exception of a terse and vigorous line here and there, a striking metaphor, or a bold and picturesque expression, the work contained nothing to distinguish it from the host of translations from the German which were then issuing from half the presses of London and Edinburgh. The author's own friends, of course, were in high glee about it; but out of their circle it was hardly seen. It fell dead from the press; and most of the edition was condemned to the service of the trunk-maker.

This was Sir Walter Scott's *début* in literature. The failure, however, hardly touched his spirits. "I was coolly received by strangers," he said, recalling the incident many years afterwards, when he stood at the head of English literature, the Ariosto of the North; "but my reputation began rather to increase among my own friends, and on the whole I was more bent to show the world that it had neglected something worth notice, than to be affronted by its indifference."

The history of the translation itself is not without its interest, giving us, as it does, our first glimpse of Walter Scott at work. Till Scott took up these German ballads, he had been known, I need hardly say, principally as a harum-scarum sort of youth, of awkward and bashful manners, possessing a fund of queer stories and old Border ballads, little scholarship, and less law, but with a turn for versification and story-telling; and one evening, when the conversation at his father's table happened to turn upon the ballads of Burger, Scott promised one of the guests, Miss Cranstoun, a rhymed version of the most popular of them, *Lenore*, from his own pen. He began his task after supper, and sat up till he had finished it, working himself up into such a state of excitement in reproducing the vivid imagery of the original as to set sleep at defiance. He presented his translation to Miss Cranstoun at breakfast the next morning, and she seems to have been particularly struck by its point and finish. "Upon my word," she said, writing to a friend, "Walter Scott is going to turn out a poet—something of a cross, I think, between Burns and Gray."

Acting upon his determination to realize this friend's conception of the powers of his

genius, Scott set vigorously to work, with the assistance of an old German dictionary, which he borrowed from the original Jonathan Oldbuck, and that of his clever and accomplished cousin of Harden, to translate everything that struck him in his reading of the literature of Germany—lyrics from Goethe, ballads from Burger, and dramas wherever he found them; and in 1799 a selection of these were, through the assistance of Monk Lewis, "a martinet in rhyme and numbers," published under Scott's name by Mr. Bell. This was the first of Sir Walter Scott's acknowledged publications; and it was the first, too, that brought him a penny in the form of what he calls "copy-money." Its price was twenty-five pounds.

Concurrently with the translation of these scraps of German poetry, Scott had been collecting the Border minstrels, and making his "first serious attempts in verse" by writing in imitation of these ballads the trifles by which he won his spurs as an original writer—the *Fire King*, the *Grey Brother*, *Glenfinlas*, and the *Eve of St. John*. It was not, however, till he was preparing the third volume of the *Minstrelsy* for the press that the idea of trying his 'prentice hand at anything more ambitious struck him, and in its original form even the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* was to use his own words, nothing more than "a romance of Border chivalry in a light-horseman sort of stanza." Like his translation of *Lenore*, too, this *Lay* owed its origin to the suggestion of a lady, the Countess of Dalkeith. Scott was in the habit, when living at Ashiestiel, of riding out with his lovely chieftainess and her husband

When Summer smiled on sweet Bowhill;

and in the course of one of these pleasant rides, Lady Dalkeith happened to repeat the grotesque story of Gilpin Horner, which she had recently heard from an old gentleman on a visit to the castle, as an o'er true tale. She insisted that Scott should "turn it into a Border ballad." "Had she asked me to write a ballad on a broomstick," said Scott, "I must have attempted it." He therefore took up his pen and sketched out "a few verses, to be called the *Goblin Page*." These he read over to his friends Erskine and Cranstoun one evening after dinner. They do not seem to have thought much of what they heard; and Scott, taking his cue from their criticism, threw his stanzas aside in a fit of disgust. "They lay long by me," says Scott, in a letter to Miss Seward, "till the applause of some friends whose judgment I valued induced me to resume the poem; so, on I wrote, knowing no

more than the man in the moon how I was to end. At length, the story appeared so uncouth that I was fain to put it into the mouth of my old minstrel, lest the nature of it should be misunderstood, and should be suspected of setting up a new school of poetry, instead of a feeble attempt to imitate the old. In the process of the romance, the page, intended to be a principal person in the work, contrived (from the baseness of his natural propensities, I suppose) to slink down stairs into the kitchen; and now he must e'en abide there."

The scene and date of this resumption Lockhart traced years after in the recollections of a cornet in the Edinburgh Light Horse. "While the troop were on permanent duty at Musselburgh, in the autumnal recess of 1802, the quarter-master (Scott), during a charge on Portobello sands, received a kick of a horse, which confined him for three days to his lodgings. Mr. Skene found him busy with his pen; and he produced before these three days expired the first canto of the *Lay*—very nearly, if his friend's memory may be trusted, in the state in which it was ultimately published. That the whole poem was sketched and filled in with extraordinary rapidity, there can be no difficulty in believing. He himself says (in the introduction of 1830), "that after he had once got fairly into the vein, it proceeded at the rate of about a canto in a week." Visiting London shortly afterwards, Scott read the manuscript to his friend Mr. Ellis under a tree in Windsor Forest; and afterwards "partly read and partly recited, sometimes in an enthusiastic style of chant," the first three or four cantos to Wordsworth when on a visit to Ashiestiel. Of its success when published, I need say nothing: it was prodigious; and, under cover of this success, Scott at once made up his mind to make literature the profession of his life.

This point once settled, and the law abandoned except as a crutch, Scott set to work with characteristic energy, entered into partnership with Ballantyne, stocked a printing-office in the Canongate with types and presses, and drew up a plan of work sufficient to keep them and himself well at work for three or four years by the republication of a costly series of standard works. To be the editor of Dryden and Swift, and the annotator of old ballads, was at this time the highest ambition of the most brilliant and fertile author of the age. Poetry was the last thing in his thoughts. "As for riding on Pegasus," he said, in a note to Mr. Ellis, when at work on the proofs of Dryden, "depend upon it I will never again cross him in

a serious way, unless I should, by some strange accident, reside so long in the Highlands, and make myself master of their ancient manners, so as to paint them with some degree of accuracy in a kind of companion to the *Minstrel Lay*." To vary the monotony of hunting up original readings and scribbling foot-notes, Scott threw off an article now and then for *Jeffrey's Review*; and in the summer vacation of 1805 we find him trying his hand at "a companion to the *Lay*," by throwing together, in the form of an historical novel, some of his recollections of Highland scenery and customs. This was the origin of *Waverley*. Like the *Lay*, however, it was no sooner taken up than it was thrown aside. "When I had proceeded as far, I think, as the seventh chapter, I shewed my work to a critical friend, whose opinion was unfavourable; and having then some poetical reputation, I was unwilling to risk the loss of it by attempting a new style of composition. I therefore then threw aside the work I had commenced, without either reluctance or remonstrance." It was not till some months after this that the idea of writing *Marmion* seems to have suggested itself; and the necessity of raising one thousand pounds to pay off some debts of his brother Thomas was the motive of this magnificent poem. Constable offered the sum in question for the copyright before a line of it had been written; and it was on the spur of making it all that Scott thought it ought to be for this handsome sum, that he put his whole soul into it, and gave up to its composition all the time that he could spare from the proof-sheets of Dryden. Most of it seems to have been composed on horseback, either on the banks of the Yarrow or the sands of Portobello. Mr. Skene, his mess-companion, tells us "that in the intervals of drilling, when out with the Edinburgh Light Horse, Scott used to delight in walking his powerful black steed up and down by himself upon the Portobello sands, within the beating of the surge; and now and then you would see him plunge in his spurs and go off as if at the charge, with the spray dashing about him. As we rode back to Musselburgh, he often came and placed himself beside me to repeat the verses that he had been composing during these pauses of our exercise." The description of Flodden field was struck out in this way; and we know from Scott's conversations with Lockhart years after, that most of the rest of his descriptive pieces were put together in the saddle when out for "a grand gallop among the braes of the Yarrow."

Of the conception of the *Lady of the Lake*, I can find no account beyond this, that

Scott, in the summer of 1809, undertook to have a third poem ready to keep Ballantyne's press in action at the end of the year. What that was to be, Scott probably knew no more than Ballantyne, for about this time he began what I may perhaps call the system of drawing bills at three, six, and nine months upon his genius, to raise cash to pay for his purchases at Abbotsford, or to guard against the presses and types in the Canongate lying idle for a day; but in reading or conversation, his imagination had been set on fire by the story of the *Lady of the Lake*, and upon the rising of the Court of Session in July, we find him starting off with Mrs. Scott and his eldest daughter to visit the scenes which he had apparently chosen form the framework of his fable. Not a little of the poem was, I believe, written in the course of the trip. The description of the Stag Chase certainly was; and I do not think one needs the gift of second-sight, knowing what we do of Scott's habits, to pick out at least one passage which was worked out in the course of the gallop from the shore of Loch Vennachar to the rock of Stirling, which Scott tells us in one of his letters that he undertook, to anticipate his critics by testing the practicability of a good horseman, well mounted, riding within the space allowed to Fitzjames after his duel with Roderick Dhu. Except bits of description, however, here and there, the greater part of the *Lady of the Lake* was confessedly written at Ashiestiel during the winter of 1809; and we have from his own pen a very characteristic conversation which took place with his cousin, Miss Christian Rutherford, upon the poem and its composition. "A lady to whom I was nearly related, and with whom I lived during her whole life on the most brotherly terms of affection, was residing with me when the work was in progress, and used to ask me what I could possibly do to rise so early in the morning. At last I told her the subject of my meditations; and I can never forget the anxiety and affection expressed in her reply. 'Do not be so rash,' she said, 'my dearest cousin. You are already popular—more so, perhaps, than you yourself will believe, or than even I or other partial friends can fairly allow to your merit. You stand high—do not rashly attempt to climb higher, and incur the risk of a fall; for, depend upon it, a favourite will not be permitted even to stumble with impunity.' I replied to this affectionate expostulation in the words of Montrose:

'He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,

Who dares not put it to the touch,
To win or lose it all.

If I fail,' I said, for the dialogue is strong in my recollection, 'it is a sign that I ought never to have succeeded, and *I will write prose for life*: you shall see no change in my temper, nor will I eat a single meal the worse. But if I succeed—

Up wi' the bonnie blue bonnet,
The dirk and the feather an' a'!"

This was one of the busiest periods of Scott's life, and it is not one of the least striking illustrations of the strength and elasticity of Scott's mind, that a poem like the *Lady of the Lake* should have been thrown off, as this was, in the two or three hours of leisure which he stole in the early morning from the manifold duties of the day.

The two or three hours which Scott thus stole in the morning were to him the golden hours of the day; and it was during these hours that the greater part of his poems and his novels were thrown off. Till he took up his abode at Ashiestiel, and settled down to his task as a man of letters by profession, Scott, like Byron and Moore, and most men of their class, had been in the habit of

Lengthening the day

By stealing a few hours from the night;

but upon a suggestion from his physician that this habit was likely to aggravate his nervous headaches, he at once reversed his plan, and adopted those habits of early rising and early work which characterized him from this period till the pen dropped from his cramped fingers on the closing pages of *Count Robert of Paris*. He was out of bed by five o'clock all the year round, at his desk by six; and by the time that his family and visitors assembled at breakfast between nine and ten, he had "broken the neck of his day's work." These were his hours of inspiration, and generally his best work. Observing how Scott was harassed by lion-hunters at Ashiestiel, and what a number of hours he spent either in shooting or courting with his visitors, or in looking after his workpeople, Mr. Cadell, Constable's partner, once expressed his wonder that Scott should ever be able to write books at all in the country. "I know that you contrive to get a few hours in your own room, and that may do for the mere pen-work; but when is it that you think?"

"Oh," said Scott, "I lie *simmering* over things for an hour or so before I get up—and there's the time I am dressing to overhaul my half-sleeping, half-waking *projet de chapitre*; and when I get the paper before

me, it commonly runs off pretty easily. Besides, I often take a doze in the plantations; and while Tom marks out a dike or a drain as I have directed, one's fancy may be running its ain riggs in some other world."

He attests the same facts in his diary eight or ten years afterwards. "The half-hour between waking and rising has all my life proved propitious to any task which was exercising my invention. When I got over any knotty difficulty in a story, or have had in former times to fill up a passage in a poem, it was always when I first opened my eyes that the desired ideas thronged upon me. This is so much the case, that I am in the habit of relying upon it, and saying to myself, when I am at a loss; 'Never mind; we shall have it at seven o'clock to-morrow morning.'" Scott, in fact, thought so much of these morning hours as the hours when his thoughts were fresh, that he generally lingered over his toilet longer than he did over anything else; "shaving and dressing," as his son-in-law tells us, "with great deliberation; for he was a very martinet as to all but the mere coxcombries of the toilet, not abhorring effeminate dandyism itself so cordially as the slightest approach to personal slovenliness, or even those 'bedgown and slipper tricks,' as he called them, in which literary men are so apt to indulge." I know no brighter picture in the history of genius than this of Sir Walter Scott sitting down to his morning task dressed in the green velvet shooting-jacket of a Scottish laird, with his books and papers around him on the desk and on the floor, his favourite hound eyeing him from the rug, a couple of spaniels gamboling with his children in the garden, and the songs of the birds pouring in through his half-open window. Scott knew nothing of those feelings of irritation that make composition a torment to so many men. His study was always open to his children no less than to his greyhound. "He never considered their tattle as any disturbance; they went and came as pleased their fancy; he was always ready to answer their questions; and when they, unconscious how he was engaged, entreated him to lay down his pen and tell them a story, he would take them on his knee, repeat a ballad or a legend, kiss them, and set them down again to their marbles or ninepins, and resume his labour as if refreshed by the interruption." Of course, when at Edinburgh, two or three hours after breakfast were spent in the Court of Session; but when at Ashiestiel or Abbotsford, these hours were devoted to the *Lady of the Lake*, *Rokeby*, or

one of his novels. He generally, however, laid down his pen about one o'clock, and devoted the afternoon to sport or exercise. When he had visitors staying with him, he would even say: "Out, damned spot, and be a gentleman," at ten o'clock; and he was in fine weather so complaisant in this respect, that most of them, like Washington Irving and Sir David Wilkie, left him with the impression that, by whatever magic he might contrive to keep Ballantyne's press at work, he was a man of leisure, who had nothing to do but bask in the sunshine, and repeat legends and ballads for the diversion of himself and his friends.

Of course the explanation of this apparent leisure of Scott, in comparison with the vast amount of manuscripts which he turned out, was to be found partly in the regularity of his habits, the steadiness with which, day after day, week after week, and year after year, he adhered to this plan, and setting apart four or five hours every morning to his task; and partly in the ease and fluency with which he used his pen when he did sit down to his desk. When Scott took up his pen, it was not to think, but to write. He never knew, I believe, what it was to cast about for either a thought or an expression; and he never wasted a second with the file. Possessing a prodigious memory—a memory that lost nothing—a powerful and vivid imagination, a fluent pen, and a spirit that courted difficulties instead of craning at them, Sir Walter Scott never needed anything more than an incident or a tradition to start with in any of his novels; and when he had once laid down the "keel of a story," it grew under his hands, chapter by chapter, and volume by volume; and a stroll in the woods, or the half-hour's quiet between waking and sleeping, or dressing, was enough to supply him with his chapters for the day's work. "I sometimes think," he says, speaking of *Harold the Dauntless*, "my fingers set up for themselves, independent of my head; for twenty times I have begun a thing on a certain plan, and never in my life adhered to it (in a work of imagination, that is) for half an hour together." "The action of composition," as he goes on to say, after noting down a similar confession in his diary years after, when, writing *Woodstock*, he found himself at the end of the second volume without the slightest idea how the story was to be wound up to a catastrophe in the third volume—"the action of composition always extended some passages, and abridged or omitted others; and personages were rendered important or insignificant, not according to their agency in the original con-

ception of the piece, but according to the success, or otherwise, with which I was able to bring them out. I only tried to make that which I was actually writing diverting and interesting, leaving the rest to fate. I have," he adds, "been often amused with the critics distinguishing some passages as particularly laboured, when the pen passed over the whole as fast as it could move, and the eye never again saw them, except in proof." These sort of confessions turn up again and again in his diary and his correspondence with Ballantyne and his brothers and sisters of the quill. Referring to the *Maid of Perth*, for instance, he makes a note in his diary that he has "sent off ten more pages this morning with a murrain. But how to get my catastrophe packed into the compass allotted for it?"

It sticks like a pistol half out of its holster, Or rather, indeed, like an obstinate bolster, Which I think I have seen you attempting, my dear,

In vain to cram into a small pillow-bier.

There is no help for it; I must make a *tour de force*, and annihilate both time and space." Of the *Antiquary*, again, he says in a note to Mr. Morritt: "I have only a very general sketch at present; but when once I get my pen to the paper, it will walk fast enough. I am sometimes tempted to leave it alone, and try whether it will not write as well without the assistance of my head as with it." The *Lord of the Isles* and *Guy Mannering* grew under his hands in exactly the same manner. Like them, and like all his works, they were written without premeditation. "The ideas rise as I write;" and the faster he wrote, Ballantyne used to say, the freer the ideas rose, and the better the story developed itself. This was Scott's opinion also. "I cannot pull well in long traces," he used to say, "when the draught is too far behind me. I love to have the press thumping, clattering, and banging in my rear; it creates the necessity which almost always makes me work best." When he was ahead of the press — when the printer's devil was not at his door waiting for copy — Scott's spirits drooped and his pen flagged, he dallied with what he was about, and lost the threads of his story. His poetry, of course, stands in a different category — that he frequently laboured, and wrote over two or three times; but all his novels were printed as they left his desk, with nothing more than a little revision at the hands of James Ballantyne, and a hasty glance at the proofs by Scott in odd half-hours.

But with all this haste and carelessness,

all this want of preparation, allowing his pen to take its own course, and his plots to construct themselves, perhaps no great writer ever took more trouble about the substratum of his fiction and poetry. Even when building with rubble, his foundations were of adamant. His imagination was vivid and powerful, and the amplitude and accuracy of his memory were the marvel of his friends. But he trusted nothing, either to memory or imagination, when he could trace out the facts themselves by paying a visit to a scene, or by hunting up an old ballad or a tradition in a library. Refusing to give ten minutes of his leisure to lay down the plot of a novel, he never hesitated a moment to give up the leisure of a week to settle a point of history, or to gather the details of a bit of scenery, which he was thinking of working into a novel. Upon points like these, he was almost finical. When at work upon *Quentin Durward*, Lockhart frequently found him in the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh, poring over maps and gazetteers with care and anxiety; and his own letters to Ballantyne attest the scrupulous nicety with which he hunted up his facts, even for the description of a village like Plessis les Tours, consulting Malte Brun's geographical works, Wraxall's *History of France* and his *Travels*, and even Philip de Comines. Most of his descriptions, too, like Byron's, are photographs; and with the *Lady of the Lake* or the *Lord of the Isles* in your hand, you may trace out every view that Scott had in his eye when penning them, with his dogs and his children at his knee, in the morning-room at Ashiestiel. He visited his friend Mr. Morritt, when he was at work upon *Rokeby*, to refresh his recollections of the scene; and Mr. Morritt gives us a striking conversation that took place the morning after Scott's arrival upon this characteristic of his compositions.

"You have often given me materials for a romance," said Scott; "now I want a good robbers' cave, and an old church of the right sort."

"We rode out," says Mr. Morritt, "in quest of these; and he found what we wanted in the ancient slate-quarries of Brignall and the ruined abbey of Egglestone. I observed him noting down even the peculiar little wild-flowers and herbs that accidentally grew round and on the side of a bold crag near his intended cave of Guy Denzil; and could not help saying, that as he was not to be upon oath in his work, daisies, violets, and primroses would be as poetical as any of the humble plants he was examining. I laughed, in short, at his

scrupulousness; but I understood him when he replied, 'that in nature herself no two scenes are exactly alike, and that whoever copied truly what was before his eyes, would possess the same variety in his descriptions, and exhibit apparently an imagination as boundless as the range of nature in the scenes he recorded; whereas, whoever trusted to imagination, would soon find his own mind circumscribed, and contracted to a few favourite images; and the repetition of these would sooner or later produce that very monotony and barrenness which had always haunted descriptive poetry in the hands of any but the patient worshippers of truth. Besides which,' he said, 'local names and peculiarities make a fictitious story look so much better in the face!'" And that was the principle upon which Scott worked in all his poems and his novels. It is the source of half their charms. Most of his characters, too, are flesh and blood. Margaret Branksome, for instance, in the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, is a photograph of Scott's first love; and Alan Fairford in *Redgauntlet* is obviously intended as a portrait of himself. Under the thin disguise of Saunders Fairford we have a sketch of Scott's father, even down to the minutest details of his dress, his suit of snuff-coloured brown, his silk stockings, his silver buckles, and his bob-wig and cocked-hat; and in Darsie Latimer we have one of the dearest of Scott's companions in his youth, Mr. William Clerk. George Constable, a friend of Scott's father, sat for Jonathan Oldbuck; but as the original conception was developed, Scott "embroidered" Constable's character with many traits from his old friend, John Clerk of Eldin. Dominie Sampson, again, was a cross between Launcelot Whale, the master of the Grammar-school at Kelso, an absent grotesque being, between six and seven feet high, and an old blue-gown, who used to stand bleaching his head in the wind at the corner of one of the streets of Edinburgh, in order to raise enough to pay for his son's education for the ministry. Most of Scott's sketches of the heroes of '15 and '45 are reproductions of his own personal recollections and those of his friends; and characters like those of the Black Dwarf and Tod Gabbie were all characters that Scott had met with in his ballad-hunting rambles. Those who knew Scott, too, before he thought fit to avow the authorship of the Scotch novels, frequently tracked him in the snow of his own dialogue; for Scott's ear was as quick as his eye; and anything particularly striking or characteristic that happened to turn

up in conversation, generally found its way in one form or another into his works.

Reinforcing his imagination and his wit with recollections like these, and possessing wider and more diversified experience than probably any writer of fiction except Fielding, Scott dashed off his novels when he had once got into the thread of his narrative with astonishing fluency. Even when his eyes were failing, and his fingers gouty, he frequently threw off thirty or forty pages of print before dinner—that, in fact, was his task when he was at work upon *Woodstock* and the *Life of Napoleon*; and till he had accomplished that, he did not think himself at liberty to take his axe and stroll out into the wood for an hour's sharp exercise. In his prime, he thought nothing of throwing off a novel in a month. *Guy Mannering* was written in six weeks about Christmas, and that he thought easy work. Very frequently, however, Sir Walter had a brace of novels on hand together, or a novel and a poem, or two or three reviews for the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly*. *Ivanhoe* and the *Monastery* were written together like this; and he took up the story of *Woodstock* as a diversion to kill time when he was ahead of the press with his *Life of Napoleon*. Hasty work in literature is not generally the highest kind of work; and of course there is in all Sir Walter Scott's works much that is thin, and rambling, and vapid. But with Sir Walter Scott literature was not an art, but a trade. What was good enough for the public, was good enough for him; and his cardinal test of the value of his work was the price of its copyright and its sale. In poetry, he wrote by inspiration; taking up his pen, like Byron, only when the fit was upon him; but when at work upon a novel or a history, all he thought of was to get through his task; and if he was not in the vein when he took up his pen, he simply wrote on, as he said, till he "wrote himself into good humour." This was not generally a very hard task; and when he had got into a good humour with his work, he wrote on as freely and as gaily as he talked. His manuscripts testify sufficiently to this. In his poems you meet with stanzas that are hardly legible with blots and interlineations; but the manuscripts of his novels are as free from everything of this description as his correspondence. You may turn over page after page without finding a single correction. He never boggled over a sentence, or cast about for an expression. "His thoughts," as his amanuensis said, "flowed easily and felicitously, without any difficulty to lay hold

of them, or to find appropriate language. He sat in his chair (when dictating), from which he rose now and then, took a volume from the bookcase, consulted it, and restored it to the shelf—all without intermission in the current of ideas, which continued to be delivered with no less readiness than if his mind had been wholly occupied with the words he was uttering." When dialogue of peculiar animation was in progress, James Ballantyne says Scott walked up and down the room, raising and lowering his voice, and, as it were, acting the parts. The file-work Scott left to the printer; and of several of his stories he did not even see the proofs till they were in the hands of the public. With the exception of the *Lay*, I doubt whether he ever read any of his poems after they were published. He liked that better than he anticipated; but I do not think the perusal increased his opinion of the critical discernment of the public. He was "never fond of his own poetry;" and when Ballantyne told him that the *Lord of the Isles* and *Rokeby* were paling in the glare and glitter of *Childe Harold* and the *Giaour*, he abandoned the laurel wreath to Byron without a struggle, and almost without a sigh. "Since one line has failed," he said, "we must strike out something else."

This was the spur under which he took up the abandoned manuscript of *Waverley*, which had been lying among the fishing-tackle of an old drawer for seven or eight years, and threw off the second and third

volumes in three weeks. When, in turn, the novels of the "Author of *Waverley*" began to pall upon a taste which likes its fiction fresh and fresh, Scott left the field to his imitators, and turned to history. "There is but one way," he said, "if you wish to be read—you must strike out something novel to suit the humour of the hour;" and that was the principle by which he was governed all through his career. It was not a very lofty principle to act upon; with a weaker man it might have been a dangerous principle, ending, as in the case of Byron, in the complete demoralization of his genius. In Scott, however, it led to nothing more than a variation of style. The most voluminous author of an age not particularly distinguished by the purity of its literature or morals, the contemporary of Byron and Moore, and the personal friend of George IV., an author, too, who avowedly set his sails to catch the popular breeze, Sir Walter Scott never allowed his genius to pollute itself by anything that, as a man, he could blush for. Talking over his writings at the close of his career with a friend, and contrasting their tone with that of Goethe's, Sir Walter said, with a flush of pride: "It is a comfort to me to think that I have tried to unsettle no man's faith, to corrupt no man's principle, and that I have written nothing which on my death-bed I should wish blotted." And his boast was true.



END OF VOL. CHII.

